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UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

BAD BUNNY

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The artist, here in Miami in 2018, told *Harper's Bazaar* that his success is "for more than just myself, but also for...all of the Latinos in the world."



MUSIC SPOTLIGHT™ COLLECTOR'S EDITION

UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

BAD BUNNY



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While he has been coy about his relationships, he seemingly had a long-term girlfriend, at least until recently.



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STAR POWER

A meteoric rise has taken Bad Bunny to the very top of the music world.

Having grown up as Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio in Puerto Rico, Bad Bunny first started to make a name for himself in the Latin music scene. He blew up in 2018 when his collaborations with Cardi B and Drake stormed the charts, leading to the release of his debut album. He's since taken the music industry by storm with his brand of Latin trap and reggaetón resonating with listeners globally, making him one of the world's most popular and exciting artists.

Three more chart-topping albums have followed, plus a Super Bowl performance with Shakira and Jennifer Lopez in 2020. By 2022, he was both the most-streamed artist and the highest-grossing touring act in the world. This February, he opened—and stole—the 2023 Grammys with a rousing medley of his hits “El Apagón” and “Despues la Playa” before winning his third major award.

Beyond music, the artist has become a fashion icon with his bold gender-nonconforming outfits; a professional wrestling champion; and a rising actor. And on top of that, he's an outspoken activist, using his platform to champion for justice and acceptance.

“I want people to remember me as someone genuine, someone with a big heart. For being myself,” Bad Bunny told *Spin* magazine. “That's what leaving your mark is about, doing something that represents who you really are.” Bad Bunny is certainly leaving his mark. And the best part? He's only just begun.



The artist, here at a Las Vegas event in 2022, is poised for even greater success in 2023—and beyond.

* EARLY YEARS

←
Bad Bunny dazzles
at Univision's 2017
Premios Juventud
event in Miami.

YOUNG & TALEN



←
A large Puerto Rican flag flies above a street in San Juan.

TED

The future superstar had a modest upbringing in Puerto Rico. BY COLETTE CLAIRE



←
The artist grew up as Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio in rural Vega Baja.



↓
The "Te Bote" remix featured Bad Bunny with other rising Latin artists.



BRYANT MYERS

Before he was the internationally famous Bad Bunny, he was simply Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, born on March 10, 1994, in the Almirante Sur section of Vega Baja, Puerto Rico. Along with his two younger brothers, Bernie and Bysael, Benito was raised in a Catholic family by his father, Tito, a truck driver, and mother, Lysaurie, a schoolteacher. His parents worked hard to maintain a stable, lower-middle-class household.

Benito grew up in a tight-knit community in the countryside, in a small orange house. Not surprisingly, his younger brother Bernie described the singer to *Rolling Stone* as a boy who "always had this magic in him," adding, "He was born unique. Even before the music, he was loved by everybody." In school, Benito was often the class clown despite also being an introverted and sensitive

child. "I wasn't the lad who got involved in the streets," said the rapper. "I liked to be at home with my family." His brother revealed, "The first time we took a summer vacation, we went to the United States. I remember he cried the whole way from Puerto Rico to our grandparents' house. He was scared of planes."

Even a 45-minute trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico, was an event for the family. It only happened about four or five times a year. This trip was an especially big deal because they would go to the large Plaza las Américas mall. As Benito described it to *The New York Times*, "You have to understand that I was just a country kid. I didn't even know where I was. I was standing there trying to ask someone, 'Where's Walmart? Where's GameStop?'.... I went to those little kiosks that had all kinds of candies,

with the little bags, and you'd fill them up and weigh them."

Benito's love of music grew throughout his childhood despite some limitations. He was allowed to choose a few CDs from the catalogs his mother would order from, where you could find artists like Marc Anthony. However, "The new Daddy Yankee album wasn't going to be there," he explained to *The New York Times*. Tego Calderón was the only reggaetón his mother let him listen to because, according to her, "If they play him on the radio, he must be good."

These limitations didn't deter his drive to learn more and more about music. Benito got a thrill from waking up and getting in the car to drive to school where he could hear Top 40 music like Ricky Martin. "At Christmas, all the other kids would play with their toys, but Benito would play his CDs," Bernie told *Rolling Stone*. Though he was shy, it was undeniable that he had a strong singing voice and he joined the children's choir of the Catholic church he attended every Sunday. However, Benito was stiff from fear during his big debut as a solo singer at his middle school talent show, where he sang Colombian rocker Juanes' 2002 hit "Mala Gente."

DJ Orma, who has known Benito since he was 10 years old, told *Fader* in 2018, "I knew he always had something special. He would always rhyme and even if it was just making fun of people, not everyone could do that. I always knew he had potential."

Benito quit the church choir at the age of 13, when he decided, "Nah, now I'm too old for this." He had started experimenting with different vocal tones and idolizing reggaetóneros he heard on the radio like Daddy Yankee, as well as salsa greats like Héctor Lavoe, and began staying up late making beats on his computer. He and his friends would go to big music emporiums in San Juan that were more like museums

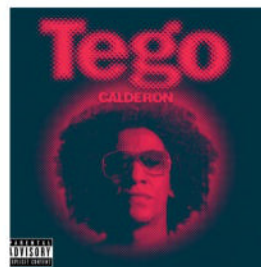
**BEING A
PUERTO RICAN,
IT MEANS
EVERYTHING.
IT FEELS GOOD
BEING ONE
MORE ARTIST
REPRESENTING
THE ISLAND."**

Bad Bunny

than retail locations, because they couldn't afford to buy much and were left admiring the album covers of their favorite artists.

To this day, Benito's parents are supportive of his career. He told *Fader*, "My mami and papi love my music. They're always listening to the radio waiting for one of my songs to come on. And when it does, they turn up the volume—and turn it back down when it's over."

That decision to quit singing for his church choir at 13 years old, in some ways, led to the beginning of



As a child, Bad Bunny listened to artists like Marc Anthony and Tego Calderón. His first solo performance was a cover of Juanes' hit "Mala Gente" in middle school.



Bad Bunny performs in Mexico in October 2017.

Benito's music career. It was around that time he began crafting beats on the computer and freestyling for friends. Free and low-cost beat-making software like FruityLoops had opened the floodgates for people like Benito, who didn't have access to fancy recording studios. However, it would still be a few more years before he reached international success.

When he started high school, he began to buy underground reggaetón tapes from the parking lot there, adding this to his repertoire of influences such as salsa, pop, disco and indie rock. According to *The New York Times* in 2020, the music on these parking lot tapes came from pickup points in the projects and was full of gritty but accessible trap, rap and reggaetón music.

As he worked on breaking free of his shyness, he would jokingly spit rhymes with his friends at school. "I did those freestyles joking around," he explained to *Fader* in 2018, "but only a few people knew I actually made tracks.... [When] I started freestyling, everyone liked it and it was very funny, but in private I did it for real."

His friends could see he was talented and started encouraging him

to put his music online: "Why don't you put out music, put it online, put it here, put it on Facebook, whatever whatever," Bad Bunny shared with *Rolling Stone* in 2020, "and I went, 'No no no.' But little by little, something was working in my mind and I said, 'It's true, I need to put something out.'"

After high school, Bad Bunny started college at the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo as a

communications and audio/visual student. He also got a job as a bagger at the Supermercados Econo grocery store, which he kept until 2016 even while he was pursuing a music career.

He was making trap tracks that were different from the traditional reggaetón sound in Puerto Rico. It took a few years before he got his first big opportunity in music in 2014 working with Puerto Rican rapper Tempo, and later that year, another Puerto Rican rapper, Bryant Myers. Typically, big record companies ignored his style of music, but Bad Bunny's popularity online began to grow exponentially and could not be ignored. Producers started calling him while he was at work "and I would go to the bathroom to respond to them," he explained to *Rolling Stone*.

Meanwhile, Bad Bunny's future manager, party promoter Noah Assad, started his own label, Rimas Entertainment, in 2014. He then landed YouTube's first direct monetization deal in Puerto Rico.

Assad heard Bad Bunny's music through a friend in 2016 and immediately got in contact with him. "I made him quit his job," Assad told *Rolling Stone* in 2020. Assad began to follow the same model he used for promoting the artists at his parties: just keep continuously releasing music. "Even the smallest opportunities we said yes to," Assad said. "Every time we release something new it helps."

Assad and Bad Bunny's relationship was definitely fruitful for both of them. Assad told *Billboard* in 2018, "We brainstorm, and if the idea comes, it comes. We take everything a day at a time. We don't treat it as rocket science." They bombarded YouTube with songs, remixes and collaborations, and all those views turned into revenue thanks to the monetization deal that Assad had.

In 2016, the song "Diles," a simple, self-produced synth-trap track, became a hit. According to *Fader* in 2018, "Diles" was "an early indicator of

PEOPLE BEFORE ME HAVE DONE WHAT I DO, BREAKING RULES AND PUSHING BOUNDARIES. BUT MAYBE I GOT HERE AT THE RIGHT TIME, WITH THE RIGHT FORCE."

Bad Bunny



The singer was a student at the University of Puerto Rico at Arecibo.



(from left) Bad Bunny, De la Ghetto, Arcangel, Ozuna and Wisin pose backstage in 2017.

what is so compelling about Bad Bunny...the versatility of his voice...and the history of his influences within it.”

In 2017, Bad Bunny was invited to appear on a remix of “Te Boté,” a song recorded by Puerto Rican rappers Nio García, Darell and Casper Mágico. The song blew up and by August 2020, it was named one of YouTube’s 50 most-viewed videos. (It currently boasts more than 2.3 billion views.) So though he still wasn’t big on the radio, Bad Bunny was already causing a stir on YouTube by late 2017, and he was garnering the attention of Drake and other artists he respected.

Still, Bad Bunny’s career was just in the early stages of fully taking off. His international breakthrough would come, though, in 2018, bringing big-time collaborations with major artists and the release of his debut album.

BECOMING ‘BAD BUNNY’

**AN INCIDENT AT SCHOOL LED TO
HIS FAMOUS STAGE MONIKER.**

Bad Bunny first started recording songs with the stage name “El Apto” (“The Fit”) but the name didn’t stick.

In March of 2020, Bad Bunny told E! News the origin of his now-famous stage moniker. “Bad Bunny, the name comes from a picture when I was a kid,” he shared. “I think that I was 6 years old. I was so mad. That was Easter day in the school and the teacher picked me to dress up.”

He posted the precious picture of him scowling in a white bunny costume as his Twitter image, and the name just stuck. When future manager Noah Assad met Bad Bunny in 2016, the name left an impression on him: “I’d never heard a name like that in our industry,” he recalled to *Rolling Stone*.

It certainly is unique and fits his personality as someone who is sensitive but outgoing and funny at the same time.

PAVING



WILLIE COLON
(Leader - Trom)



Héctor Lavoe, seen performing in 1977, was an early influence for Bad Bunny.

THE WAY

The artist's inspirations can be traced back through a long line of Latin music icons. BY JON HADUSEK



A street mural of Lavoe in Lima, Peru, shows the reach of the Puerto Rican singer.



HECTOR LAVOE (Vocalist)

HÉCTOR LAVOE

Héctor Lavoe was a Puerto Rican salsa singer and a beloved figure among Latin music fans during his lifetime. Bad Bunny considers Lavoe “the Michael Jordan of Latin music” and consistently cites him as a major influence during interviews. “He has too many hits—hymns—it’s ridiculous,” Bad Bunny told *The New York Times*. “Obviously the composers, producers and arrangers all contributed. But his style made such a mark—his voice, his way of singing.” Lavoe also came from a similar “jíbaro” background, a Puerto Rican term that loosely describes those of a humble rural upbringing. Sadly, Lavoe’s latter years were plagued with tragedy, with the singer being diagnosed with HIV and enduring the deaths of multiple family members, including the passing of his 17-year-old son

Héctor Jr. In June of 1988, Lavoe attempted suicide by jumping out of a hotel balcony in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Though he survived the fall, his health never fully recovered and he would pass away from complications due to AIDS in 1993.

DADDY YANKEE

This superstar is widely considered the “King of Reggaetón” and helped pave the way for Bad Bunny and Latin rap in general. Born Ramón Luis Ayala Rodríguez, Daddy Yankee initially aspired to be a professional baseball player and even tried out for the Seattle Mariners before his prospective career was cut short when he was hit by a stray AK-47 round. He would spend a year and a half recovering from the gunshot wound, and the bullet was never removed from his hip. Daddy Yankee credits the incident—however horrific it was—with allowing him to fully concentrate on his music career, which flourished over the next two decades. The international hit “Gasolina” would bring the reggaetón sound to the masses, and his album *Barrio Fino* became the top-selling Latin music album of the 2000s. Recognizing his profound influence on the next wave of Latin rap, Daddy Yankee would go on to collaborate with Bad Bunny on multiple tracks, passing the proverbial torch to his fellow Puerto Rican artist.



Daddy Yankee is known as the “King of Reggaetón.”



DADDY YANKEE



←
Ricky Martin performs in 2000, during the height of his success.

RICKY MARTIN

Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin, who first rose to fame as part of the boy band Menudo, brought Latin pop to the international stage with his 1999 self-titled album and English-language debut. The inescapable hit single “Livin’ la Vida Loca” shot to No. 1 in both the U.S. and U.K., and although it made some concessions for Western audiences with its English lyrics and dance-pop production, the track’s ubiquitous success opened the door for other Latin artists to achieve recognition on a global scale. Martin’s influence can’t be understated, and he inevitably crossed paths with Bad Bunny for the latter’s “Caro” (included on Bad Bunny’s debut album *X 100pre*) and a three-headed collab with Bad Bunny and Residente on “Cántalo,” which was featured on Martin’s *Pausa* EP.

IN PUERTO RICO YOU ARE BORN KNOWING WHO RICKY MARTIN IS. HE HAS AN IMPECCABLE AND EPIC CAREER, AND IT’S AMAZING THAT HE STILL INSPIRES PEOPLE.”

Bad Bunny

↓
Martin (far right) got his start in the boy band Menudo.





↑
Martin and Bad
Bunny take to the
stage together
at the 2019 Latin
Grammy Awards.

Reggaeton pioneer Vico C onstage during a taping of MTV Puerto Rico *Unplugged* in March 2005.



VICO C

If Daddy Yankee is considered the “King of Reggaetón,” then Brooklyn, New York-born rapper Vico C stands as a key pioneer of the genre. Active since the mid-’80s, Vico is a renowned figure in Latin rap circles, melding conscious Spanish lyricism with the reggaetón production that helped set the template for the genre’s core sound. Both of those elements can be found in Bad Bunny’s music. Although his parents didn’t allow him to listen to anything profane when he was growing up, they made an exception when Vico’s songs became more family-friendly. “The only thing they’d allow me to listen to was Vico C,” Bad Bunny told *GQ* in 2022. “At that time, Vico C was street, but they allowed me to listen to him when he started to make cleaner music.”



↑
Vico C shows off his Latin Grammy trophy for Best Rap/Hip-Hop Album in 2002.

I THINK THE FIRST TIME I HEARD VICO C, TEGO CALDERÓN, I KNEW IT WAS WHAT I WANTED TO DO THE REST OF MY LIFE. IT WAS A DREAM AND NOW I'M HAPPY IT CAME TRUE."

Bad Bunny



→ Tego Calderón poses with a trophy at the Latin Grammy Awards in 2015.

TEGO CALDERÓN

Bad Bunny would eventually make the leap from Vico C to the more explicit music of Tego Calderón—the first reggaetón artist he became “really hooked on.” In fact, Bad Bunny liked Calderón so much, his parents would use the music to bribe him. “I always tell the story of when I was in school: If I was feeling lazy and I didn’t want to get up, they’d threaten me with not being allowed to listen to Tego Calderón,” Bad Bunny recalled to *GQ*. “Man, I’d get up so fast and get dressed. I’d be ready. ‘You’re not going to listen to Tego’s song!’ And I’d say, ‘Okay, Mami, fine. I’m ready!’” A major influence on the young Puerto Rican, Calderón’s balance of hard-hitting, sociopolitical lyrics and lighter themes regarding dance, romance and personal reflection would come to parallel Bad Bunny’s own lyrical subject matter.

→

Tego Calderón is perhaps Bad Bunny’s biggest musical hero.



A full-page photograph of Marc Anthony. He is smiling broadly, looking slightly to his right. He has his right hand behind his head. He is wearing a dark blue or black blazer over a white button-down shirt that is open at the collar. A thin chain with a circular pendant is visible around his neck. The background is a soft-focus stage setting with pink and blue lighting. In the foreground, the out-of-focus hands of audience members are visible, some holding up phones to record.

**IT'S SO UNFAIR
TO JUST LUMP
EVERYBODY
IN.... WE'RE
ALL LATINO-
MEXICANS,
ECUADORIANS,
PANAMANIANs,
PUERTO
RICANS,
CUBANS—BUT
WE ALL HAVE...
OUR OWN
MUSIC.”**

Marc Anthony

Marc Anthony
lights up the
Latin Billboard
Awards in 2014.



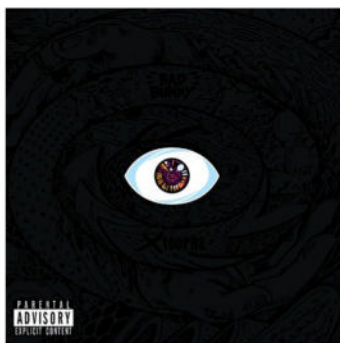
←
Bad Bunny and
Anthony steal the
show at the 2018
Latin Grammys.

MARC ANTHONY

Much like Ricky Martin, New York-born singer Marc Anthony would play a critical role in bringing Latin music to Western demographics in the late 1990s. American audiences are perhaps most familiar with his 1999 single “I Need to Know,” which hit No. 5 on the charts in the wake of commercially successful Latin-Anglo crossover attempts by Martin and Enrique Iglesias. However, Anthony stuck to a more traditional salsa-based style for much of his career, becoming the genre’s all-time bestselling artist in the process. Anthony’s track “Valió la Pena” was included on Bad Bunny’s official Apple Music “Influences” playlist, and the two joined forces with actor-rapper Will Smith for the 2018 single “Está Rico”—another example of Bad Bunny directly collaborating with one of his Latin music forerunners.



←
Anthony was
among the first
Latin artists Bad
Bunny ever heard
on the radio.



The artist's success did not come overnight. Like many others who had cut their teeth on SoundCloud, Bad Bunny would gradually garner attention by releasing singles and making guest appearances on songs by established performers in the Latin music community such as Daddy Yankee, Arcángel, Karol G and Becky G, among others. Many of the tracks Bad Bunny appeared on in 2016 and 2017 would reach Latin platinum certification by the Recording

← *X100pre*, released in 2018, debuted at No. 29 on the U.S. Billboard 200.

RABBIT RUNS FREE

Bad Bunny hits it big on a track with Cardi B and drops his debut album, X100pre. BY JON HADUSEK

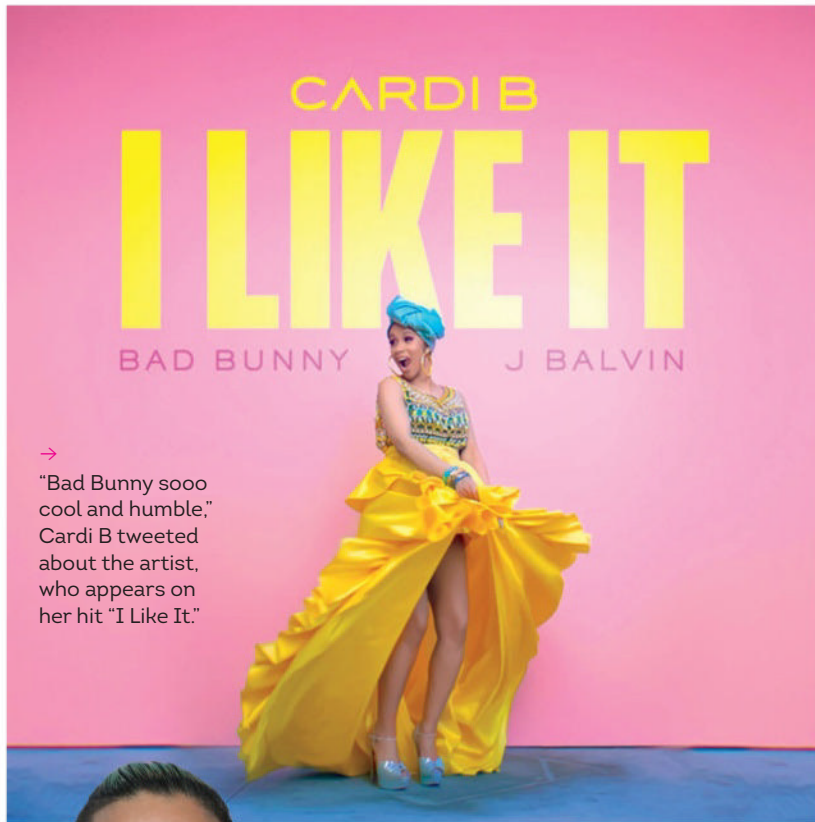




↑ The rapper performs with J Balvin at the 2018 American Music Awards.

**WE ARE SO
THANKFUL
TO HAVE THIS
OPPORTUNITY.
[CARDI B IS]
ONE OF THE
TOP ARTISTS....
WE'RE SO
PROUD OF HER
AND THE FACT
THAT SHE IS
REPRESENTING
LATINOS ON A
GLOBAL LEVEL."**

Bad Bunny



→ "Bad Bunny sooo cool and humble," Cardi B tweeted about the artist, who appears on her hit "I Like It."

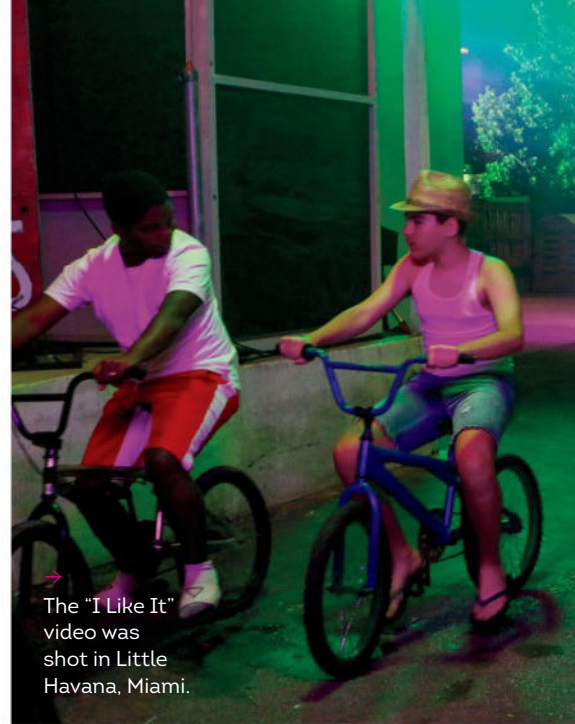


DJ LUIAN

Industry Association of America. Meanwhile, his one-off singles as lead artist ("Soy Peor," "Metes Cabra," "Chambea," "Amorfoda" and "Estamos Bien") also fared well, setting the table for his mainstream breakthrough as a solo performer.

A notable guest spot alongside J Balvin on Cardi B's Billboard Hot 100 No. 1 hit "I Like It" in 2018 was a major turning point, putting Bad Bunny's name on the radar of audiences stateside and abroad. In an interview with *Billboard*, he said he "loved the track from the beginning" and considered it a hit even without his involvement. He would go on to perform the song alongside Cardi B and J Balvin during the former's set at Coachella.

"The feedback when J Balvin and I came out [at Coachella], you could feel the support from the Latinos and from the people that were not Latino," Bad Bunny said, adding that he had always wanted to attend Coachella



→ The "I Like It" video was shot in Little Havana, Miami.

as a kid and called the performance "truly an incredible experience."

There was no halting the momentum, and the remainder of 2018 would see Bad Bunny prepping for the release of his long-awaited debut album, *X 100pre*. However, he would first have to sever his professional ties with DJ Luian's Hear This Music label, which had apparently prevented him from releasing a full studio album. In an Instagram live video, Bad Bunny stated that the label never gave him the "support" to release an album, though comments from Luian implied that the separation had remained cordial and he continued producing tracks for the singer.

Bad Bunny kept the LP's release under tight wraps for most of 2018 as he dropped a handful of singles, including the Drake collab "Mia." Like Cardi B's "I Like It," teaming with a big-name artist proved fruitful, with the track hitting No. 5 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. Despite language barriers, the two artists hit it off in the studio, with Drake even laying down his bars entirely in Spanish.

"We spoke about everything," Bad Bunny told *Billboard* of working with Drake. "I don't speak English well, but after a few drinks you can speak any language. We spoke about music, basketball, everything."



Bad Bunny followed “Mia” with the single “Solo de Mí” in December 2018. The song carried a poignant message against domestic violence, with a jarring music video featuring a woman lip-synching to Bad Bunny’s vocals while being physically hit and gashed. The clip ends with Bad Bunny rescuing the abuse victim and

taking her to a club to “happily dance the night away,” as *Rolling Stone* noted in a feature article.

The song and video could be seen as a reaction to the occupation of Puerto Rican Governor Ricardo Rosselló’s San Juan mansion by feminist activists in late 2018. The protestors had demanded a state of emergency be declared following the murder of 41 women in Puerto Rico that year—more than half of whom were killed by intimate partners. The protestors were reportedly beaten and pepper-sprayed by police on the third day of the occupation.

“I’m not sure if cockfighting is abuse,” Bad Bunny posted on Instagram at the time. “But gender violence against women and the absurd amount of women who are murdered a month IS. When are we going to prioritize what really matters? We always want to blame everyone except the one who really is to blame. IT’S TIME TO TAKE ACTION NOW![...] Respect women, respect men, respect your neighbor,

respect life! LESS VIOLENCE, MORE PERREO (AND IF SHE DOESN’T WANT IT, LET HER PERREAR ALONE AND DON’T BOTHER HER).”

After dropping “Solo de Mí,” Bad Bunny announced a week later that his debut album, *X 100pre*, was coming out on Christmas Eve via the Rimas Entertainment label, concluding a six-month recording process.

“Real, real, real, real, I finished the album,” Bad Bunny remarked to *Billboard*. “At that point I said I wanted to release it [on] Christmas. I didn’t want the year to end without releasing the album. I wanted to close 2018 with it.”

At long last, Bad Bunny had a full-length LP to his name and a collection of songs that showcased his diverse palette of genres and musical styles. Free from the restrictions of his former management, he was now taking his career into his own hands both professionally and artistically.



→ Bad Bunny scored another big hit when he collaborated with Drake on “Mia.”

IF I HAD TO CHOOSE A MOMENT, I THINK IT WOULD BE JUST BEFORE I RELEASED MY FIRST ALBUM, *X 100PRE*. THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED THAT MY LIFE HAD CHANGED."

Bad Bunny



"I feel these past two years I've done as much as I could according to what the business required," he said. "I have other goals, another vision. I have the space and liberty to create."

Using Latin pop, reggaetón and trap as a primary foundation, Bad Bunny tapped producers such as Tainy, La Paciencia, Diplo and more, allowing him to pivot across various genres. For example, the single "Caro" (featuring guest vocals from Ricky Martin) embraced a melodic pop rock vibe, while the Diplo-produced "200 MPH" brought a harder Latin rap sound. There's even hints of pop punk ("Tenemos Que Hablar") and '80s stadium rock ("Como Antes") across the LP's lengthy 54-minute runtime.

The diversity of the tracklist was a major source of praise for Bad Bunny's debut album. *X 100pre* would go on to notch a favorable score of 84 out of 100 on review aggregate site Metacritic, with major publications celebrating Bad Bunny's individualistic and amorphous musical approach.

"*X 100pre* comes into its own when it demonstrates Bad Bunny's

singularity as an artist, even among the current wave of Latin American pop stars," opined Alexis Petridis of *The Guardian*. "There's frequently an off-kilter creativity about the beats—as on 'Cuando Perriabas' or '¿Quién Tú Eres?,' the latter based around a warped piano sample.... But its most valuable currency lies in its ability to wrong-foot the listener, unexpectedly taking off in a different direction midway through a track."

X 100pre produced nine singles, making Bad Bunny a fixture on song charts throughout 2019 and helping cement his soon-to-be status as a powerhouse on streaming services like Spotify. The album itself would peak at No. 11 on the U.S. Billboard 200—a lofty achievement for a Latin artist—and No. 1 on Billboard's Latin album charts. Those eye-popping chart positions and streaming stats would soon become synonymous with Bad Bunny, who had now assumed full control over the trajectory of his career.

"At the beginning I did what I could," Bad Bunny told *GQ* in March 2019. "Now I do whatever I want."

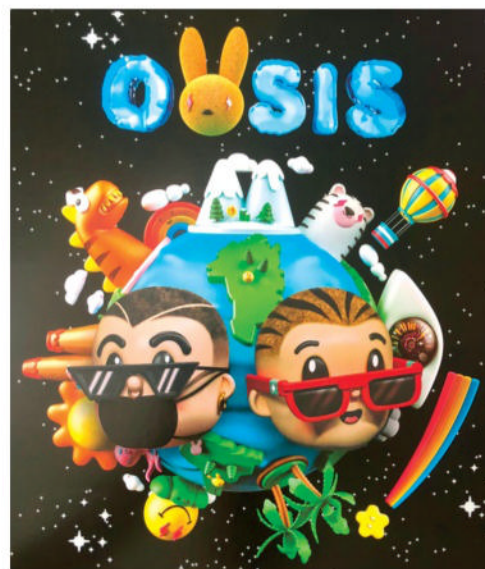
The "Solo De Mi" video, starring Laura Chimaras, took a stance against domestic abuse. Meanwhile, Bad Bunny marched in favor of the resignation of Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló, who'd been accused of sexism and homophobia.

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The performer appears with Becky G at 2017's Latin American Music Awards.



COOL COLLAB

Bad Bunny's appearance alongside J Balvin on Cardi B's "I Like It" was a career highlight for both Latin artists up to that point, as the song went on to be a No. 1 hit in 2018. Piggybacking on its success, Bad Bunny and Balvin would announce the collaborative album *Oasis* in September of that year before eventually dropping the eight-song offering in June 2019.

The duo's chemistry was seamless, as the two traded verses over production from Sky, Albert Hype, Tainy, Legendury Beatz, Nicael Arroyo, DJ Luian and Mambo Kingz. Tainy's involvement on the tracks "Yo Le Llego," "Cuidao por Ahí" and "Un Peso" reprised his work with Bad Bunny and Balvin on "I Like It."

Once again, fans lapped it up, as the collaborative album hit No. 9 on the U.S. Billboard 200 chart and topped the Latin Billboard tally.

The critical praise would also carry over from *X 100pre*, with Pitchfork giving *Oasis* a favorable score of 8.0 out of 10 and AllMusic awarding the LP with 4.5 out of 5 stars.

"I am proud to say I LOVE Bad Bunny," Balvin remarked in the press release for *Oasis*. "We always seem to be on the same wavelength, as he likes what I like."

In his own words, Bad Bunny called the collab "a transcendental and refreshing album; it is a rescue, a relief."

Whatever **HE**

When Bad Bunny released the video for his new single “Vete” in November 2019, the clip closed with a mysterious acronym: YHLQMDLG. Details about exactly what that meant were scarce, but that didn’t stop the frenzy of anticipation that the artist continued to stir up through his performance at the Super Bowl LIV halftime show, his appearance at the 2020 NBA All-Star Celebrity Game and his Twitter feed.

With each, Bad Bunny revealed more and more pieces to the puzzle. On Twitter, he once again dropped the letters YHLQMDLG along with emojis that spelled out “coming soon” and followed it with a list that included 20 entries. The first 19 spots were just the word “Palo,” or “hit,” with a fire emoji. The 20th was simply “Gracias.” Internet sleuths also pointed out that he was wearing the number 29 on his jersey for the celebrity basketball game. Even as they continued connecting the dots, Bad Bunny finally confirmed the rumors on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*: On Feb. 29, 2020, he was going to drop a new 20-track album called YHLQMDLG, an acronym that stood for *Yo Hago Lo Que Me Da La Gana*—“I Do Whatever I Want.” The crowd in Studio 6B at Rockefeller Center and around the world went wild.

As exciting as that was, it did come as a bit of a surprise for even his most ardent fans. Over the previous two years, he’d been unstoppable. He released his debut album, *X 100pre*, in late 2018, and six months later he dropped *Oasis*, a collaborative LP with J Balvin. Throughout 2019, he

toured constantly, doing two cross-country runs in North America, a month of shows in Europe and some huge concerts in Latin America. Anticipation for the album kept boiling over but the chatter surrounding it did come with a twinge of worry that it wouldn’t reach the creative peaks of the rapper’s previous work.

Those concerns were quickly wiped away when YHLQMDLG finally hit the streaming services of the world. “This is the album I would have wanted to make when I was 15,” he told Pitchfork of the album, which was something of a statement piece, showcasing his deep love for the genres and artists that inspired and mentored him early on while also keeping an eye on the sounds and styles of the future. Latin trap and reggaetón were going to evolve no matter what. Bad Bunny simply wanted to make sure he played a key role in its expansion.

Much of YHLQMDLG finds Bad Bunny offering tribute to the icons of Latin music. The whole album



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Bad Bunny speaks virtually to high school students in 2020.

kicks off with a song built around a synthesized flip of the melody from “The Girl From Ipanema,” the bossa nova classic written by Brazilian composer Antonio Carlos Jobim. Other tracks work in elements of reggaetón classics like Kartiel’s “Si Te Vas” and Cosculluela’s “Pa’ La Pared.”

But Bad Bunny’s biggest flex was landing features by some of the musical giants that dominated Latin music when he was coming up. Daddy Yankee, the now-retired Puerto Rican artist once known as “The King of Reggaetón,” lends a verse on the swinging track “La Santa.” Dominican rapper Arcángel pops up on the nasty “P FKN R” along with then-newcomer Kendo Kaponi. And the track “Safaera” boasts flips of hits by Missy Elliott and Bob Marley along with guest verses from both renowned duo Jowell & Randy and superstar vocalist Ñengo Flow.



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AllMusic called YHLQMDLG “a work of peerless musical invention.”



L WANTS

The performer follows up his first album with the triumphant YHLQMDLG. BY ROBERT HAM

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The artist wears a face mask in 2019, months before the start of the pandemic.

THIS NEW ALBUM IS HAPPIER.... I DON'T WANT TO COMPETE WITH MY LAST ALBUM BECAUSE IT'S SOMETHING DIFFERENT. PEOPLE WILL SEE AN EVOLUTION OF X100PRE."

Bad Bunny

* SOPHOMORE SUCCESS



YouTube Music



Bad Bunny catches his breath in the YouTube Music Artist Lounge at Coachella in 2019.

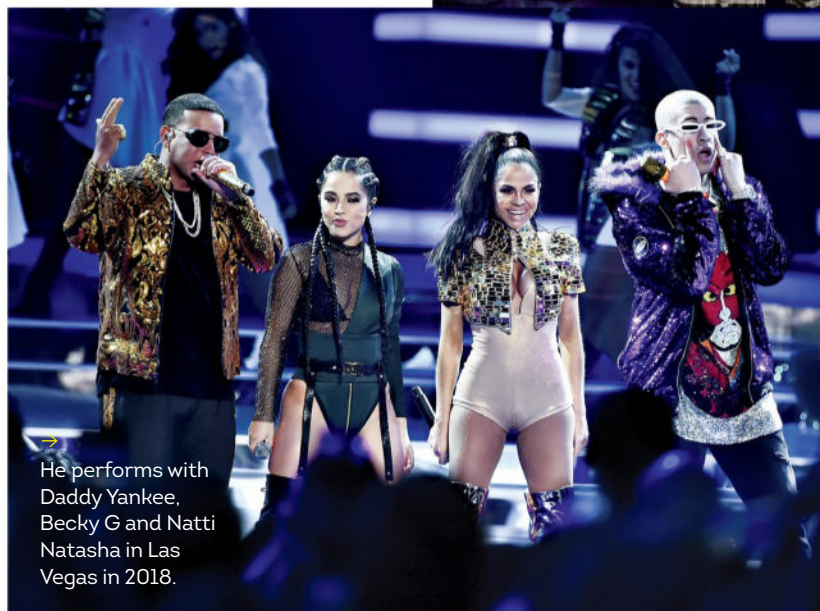


RIGHT NOW, I'M IN MY HAPPIEST MOMENT OF MY CAREER.... I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT. THAT'S HOW I FEEL RIGHT NOW. IT'S ABOUT DOING WHAT YOU FEEL."

Bad Bunny



→ The star wins some laughs on *The Late Late Show With James Corden* in 2020.



→ He performs with Daddy Yankee, Becky G and Natti Natasha in Las Vegas in 2018.

"I love to surprise people," the artist told *Vogue* of the wide variety of styles and influences on his new release. "I think it's the fun of what I do. It's my whole thing in terms of music and art—surprising people. I don't want to always give them the same thing."

Critics appreciated the surprises and fell all over themselves to praise the album, which would land on the best albums of 2020 lists for a number

of prestigious publications. *The New York Times* called it "strikingly good," declaring that the artist "finds gold in the past." NPR also applauded the album's "inability to be confined within one theme—it dynamically weaves its way through heartbreak, yearning, a good time at the club and, of course, [Bunny's] pride for Puerto Rico."

All this approval was nice, but it was only a small part of the record's raging

success. Upon its release *YHLQMDLG* debuted at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 charts, the highest-charting album of all Spanish-language music at that time. (Bad Bunny would beat his own record eight months later.) *YHLQMDLG* also set the record for the best streaming numbers for a Latin album in its first week of release, with over 200 million streams. It would eventually be named 2020's most-streamed album on Spotify, racking up 3.3 billion streams that year. When the dust settled, *YHLQMDLG* had gone platinum 24 times (for Latin music, each platinum certification equals 60,000 in sales) and scored a Grammy for Best Latin Pop or Urban Album.

Amid all the clamor surrounding *YHLQMDLG* and its creator, one

SUPER SHOWCASE

THE RAPPER TEAMS UP WITH JENNIFER LOPEZ AND SHAKIRA FOR SUPER BOWL LIV'S HALFTIME EVENT.

The halftime show for Super Bowl LIV was already set to be a historic one. The performance was the first to be produced by Jay Z's Roc Nation as part of a multiyear partnership with the NFL and, as *Billboard* reported at the time, their plans were to "ensure that... the Super Bowl spotlights the culture of the city that hosts it." As the championship game was being held in Miami, that meant honoring the Latin community with a co-headlining performance by two pop superstars, Jennifer Lopez and Shakira.

Roc Nation did keep one part of the show a secret: surprise appearances by young reggaetón stars J Balvin and Bad Bunny. Balvin took the stage to perform a mashup of his own song with some of

Lopez's hits. Bad Bunny, on the other hand, performed alongside Shakira. The dynamic duo took on a fun cover of his Cardi B collaboration "I Like It" and mashed together her 2016 hit "Chantaje" with his tune "Callaíta."

Bad Bunny's appearance helped push the viewership of the halftime show to even greater heights. According to *Variety*, there was a 4% increase in viewership from the previous year in the U.S. (a whopping total of 103 million viewers), and sales and streams of the artists' music jumped by over 1,000% in the weeks after the performance aired. Moreover, the video of the halftime show remains one of the most streamed on YouTube with over 260 million views as of this writing.

track on the album gave pause to Bad Bunny's critics and fans. The record closes out with "<3," a minimalist track that has no features and some of the artist's most heartfelt lyrics. On it, Bad Bunny thanks everyone who has helped make his career possible—and he also drops a small bomb that he was not only going to release a second album in 2020, but he was also likely to, as he sings, "retire calmly like Miguel Cotto"—a reference to the famed Puerto Rican boxer who hung up his gloves in 2017.

No one faulted Bad Bunny for wanting to both go out on top and to get some rest. "I don't even sleep anymore," he sang on "<3." "And this fame is making me sick."

As it was, the COVID pandemic shut down the concert industry just a few weeks after the release of *YHLQMDLG*. However, Bad Bunny continued his domination as a streaming artist, and promptly hit the studio to record yet another album.

→
Bad Bunny and Shakira score big at Super Bowl LIV in Miami in February 2020.



(((SiriusXm)))

pan

(((SiriusXm)))

→ The musician, here in 2020, shows off a plaque celebrating over 2 billion spins on Pandora.



* 2020 VISION

Locked Down &
DETER

A full-page photograph of Bad Bunny performing on stage. He is wearing a shiny, metallic silver puffer jacket over a red mesh shirt, red leather pants, and black sunglasses. He is holding a microphone and singing. The background features bright, diagonal white light beams against a dark stage.

←
Bad Bunny
performs with
Jhay Cortez
for the 2021
Grammy Awards.

MINED

The rapper emerges during the pandemic with a darker and more diverse third album. BY JON HADUSEK



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With the pandemic preventing Bad Bunny from touring behind *YHLQMDLG*, he hit the studio to record his third album, *El Último Tour Del Mundo*.

Bad Bunny released his sophomore album, *YHLQMDLG*, just a few weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread global lockdowns. The music industry was thrust into chaos, and without the ability to tour in support of his new album, Bad Bunny hunkered down to make another.

“For a moment, it seemed like the end of the world,” he told Apple Music.

El Último Tour Del Mundo (Spanish for “The Final Tour of the World”) would be recorded during the quarantine days of 2020 and was inspired by the lockdown fantasy of what a Bad Bunny album from the future would sound like. It proved to be a major change of direction—largely due to the circumstances of its creation. The hard-hitting reggaetón/dancehall-style of past records was suppressed for a darker, more personal set of songs, incorporating elements of alternative rock, folk and even post-punk. Speaking with *Billboard*, Bunny described it as “a

more sentimental album, more chill, the kind of thing you can listen to in your room” (as many people were forced to do during the pandemic).

Bad Bunny had already set the table for another 2020 album when he teased as much on “<3”—the final track on *YHLQMDLG*—rapping that he’ll be back in nine months

with another record. Some of his more obsessive fans began to piece together the clues. When the single “Dakiti” dropped in October, the semitruck used for the eventual album art makes an appearance in the music video bearing the phrase “El Último Tour Del Mundo.” Many speculated that it would be the album title, and they were proven correct when Bad Bunny formally announced the LP in November.

“I already had intended to come with something very different,” he told Apple Music. “It’s about taking risks and fulfilling my wishes and dreams.”

A futuristic take on reggaetón, “Dakiti” would peak at No. 5 on the Billboard Hot 100 and pave the way for another hit-filled offering from the Puerto Rican star. The track is widely considered one of Bad Bunny’s finest moments and a highlight of post-2020 pop music in general. Its dark backdrop of synths and pulsing rhythms seemed to encapsulate the unsettling mood of late 2020, whereas the hooky chorus is downright joyful, beaming light through a storm of melancholy. Featuring vocals from Jhay Cortez, “Dakiti” is also one of only three collaborative tracks on *El Último Tour Del Mundo*.





odtime h

The superstar kicks back at a season-opening party in 2021 for the Major League Soccer team Inter Miami CF.

CLUB B

OBVIOUSLY I CAN MAKE REGGAETÓN, BUT I CAN ALSO MAKE OTHER RHYTHMS...AND THAT'S PART OF WHAT I'M PASSIONATE ABOUT—CREATING AND HAVING NO LIMITS."

Bad Bunny

IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM YHLQMDLG. THIS IS A MORE SENTIMENTAL ALBUM.... A BIT MORE ROCK 'N' ROLL.... IT'S MORE MUSICAL, HAS MORE FUSIONS."

Bad Bunny

"I usually have a main idea for a song," Bad Bunny told *Billboard*. "For this one, though, Jhay composed the base, the initial rhythm and the main idea together with [co-producer Gabriel] Mora. I then added to the evolution of the production, rhythm and lyrics with Tainy. It was a combined effort, which is unusual for me, but when one works as a team, great things come out."

Up to this point, vocal collabs had been the name of the game for Bad Bunny. But as previously mentioned, his third album would only feature three (the other two being "La Noche de Anoche" with Rosalía and "Sorry Papi" with Abra). While it appeared that this was an effect of the pandemic—Rosalía and Abra would record their respective parts remotely—Bad Bunny insisted that

the decision to go mainly solo was a deliberate one.

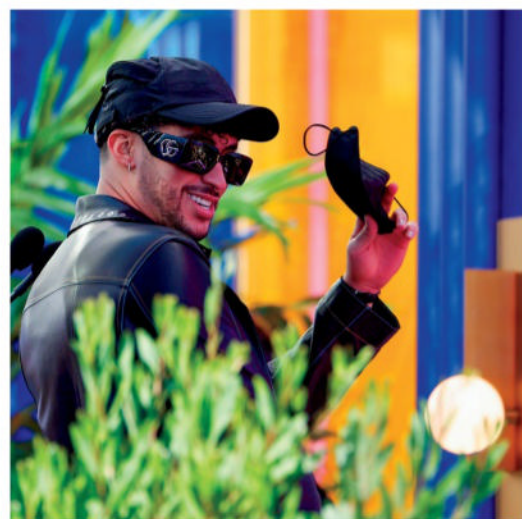
"I understand that in this business, everyone lives for collaborating on albums," he told Apple Music. "I thought it was time to demonstrate versatility and bring something fresh to the fans."

In addition to the synthwave of "Dakiti," Bad Bunny also explores psych folk on the bizarre "Trellas," alternative rock ("Yo Visto Así"), braggadocious trap ("Hoy Cobre" and "Booker T") and emo rap ("Maldita Pobreza"). This knack for genre blending and diverse tracklists was becoming Bad Bunny's signature tactic, offering listeners multiple avenues for "getting into" his music. It's one of the reasons why "Dakiti" was such an effective pre-release single. This one song has elements of a few of those aforementioned styles, introducing fans of all types of music to the mixed palette of sounds captured on *El Último Tour Del Mundo*.

"I laugh because people told me I kept on releasing perreo [reggaetón party music] at a time when people couldn't go out and party, and I said, 'OK. Now you can't complain,'" he told *Billboard*. "This is an album for



A Bad Bunny exhibit went up in 2021 at Roberto Clemente Coliseum in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



The performer flashes a big smile at the 2021 Billboard Music Awards, where he won Top Latin Male Artist.



↑
Rosalía and Bad Bunny perform "La Noche de Anoche" on *SNL* in February 2021.

you to stay at home, chill, having a beer, a glass of wine, paying attention to the lyrics. It's a bit more rock 'n' roll, a lot of guitars—there's one song that only has guitar—it's more musical, has more fusions and also reggaetón and rap."

That artistic approach, however risky, paid off. *El Último Tour Del Mundo* would become the first all-Spanish-language album to hit No. 1 on the U.S. Billboard 200 chart, adding to the accolades and record-breaking feats that were beginning to pile up for Bad Bunny. His ability to transcend the barriers of entry facing other Latin artists had proven extraordinary.

"In the past, fans, even Latin fans, underestimated their Latin artists and felt that American artists were better," the entertainer told *Billboard*. "I never believed that. I always thought we were in the same level, and little by little people have realized that's the case, and we've shown Latin music can go as far as any other."

PLAYBOY BUNNY

THE ARTIST BECOMES ONLY THE SECOND MAN TO APPEAR ON THE COVER OF THE FAMED MAGAZINE.

Bad Bunny appeared on the cover of the first digital *Playboy* in July 2020, becoming the only man to appear on the cover of the magazine outside of its founder, Hugh Hefner. There was an alternate cover as well, making Bad Bunny the only digital cover star to appear on two separate covers. The July issue also included the feature story "Bad Bunny Is Not Playing God."

Shot in Miami prior to the pandemic by STILLZ, the imagery plays off the feature's title, depicting Bad Bunny as a Greek god with his nails bedazzled with the iconic Playboy Bunny logo—a fitting detail. Elsewhere he's

seen relaxing by the pool next to a pile of *Playboy* mags.

Given the magazine's target demographic and typical imagery and content, the feature story sees Bad Bunny open up about his views on sexuality, offering the type of kindhearted and empathetic statements he's become known for in the LGBTQ+ community.

"Everyone is free to see it as they want and do it with whoever they want, however they want, with infinite possibilities," he said in the *Playboy* interview. "In the end, we are human beings. Everybody feels, everybody falls in love with whoever they're meant to."

Bad Bunny,

GOOD

As Bad Bunny's fame has grown, so has his ability to put a spotlight on the issues that his homeland of Puerto Rico is facing. In August and September of 2017, Bad Bunny was on tour in South America when both Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico back to back. An estimated 2,600 to 3,300 people died, more than 300,000 homes were damaged and blackouts began to plague the country. This tragedy ignited the artist's passion to help Puerto Rico.

The island is an unincorporated U.S. territory that has been in a recession for more than a decade. According to *Rolling Stone*, in 2020, the government was "mired in corruption, the island faced more than \$50 billion worth of unfunded pensions, mass school closures and an uptick in homicides."

Bad Bunny has helped Puerto Rico in various ways including charity, direct political action and his music. He told *Billboard* in 2022 that he got involved because he came "from a barrio in Puerto Rico, from a working-class family; the fact that I wasn't rich, that I had a job, that I had to work for minimum wage, that has an influence."

In 2018, Bad Bunny started the Good Bunny Foundation to help provide "for future stars in music,

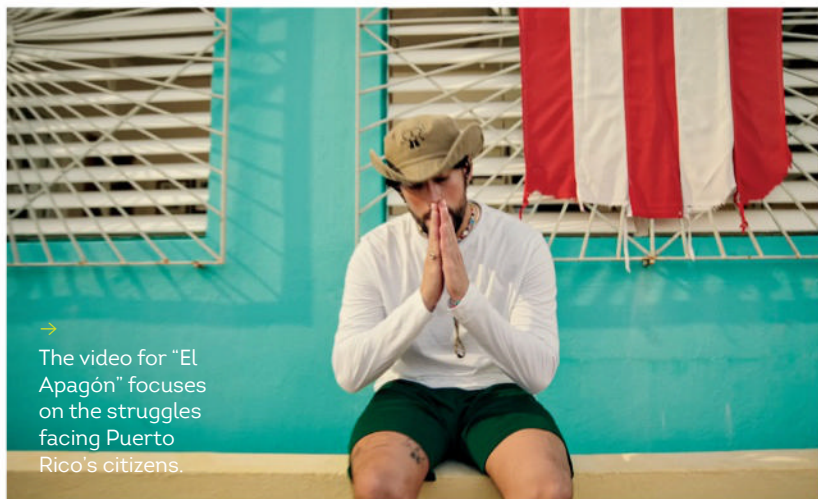
→ The star joins a demonstration celebrating the 2019 resignation of embattled Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rosselló.



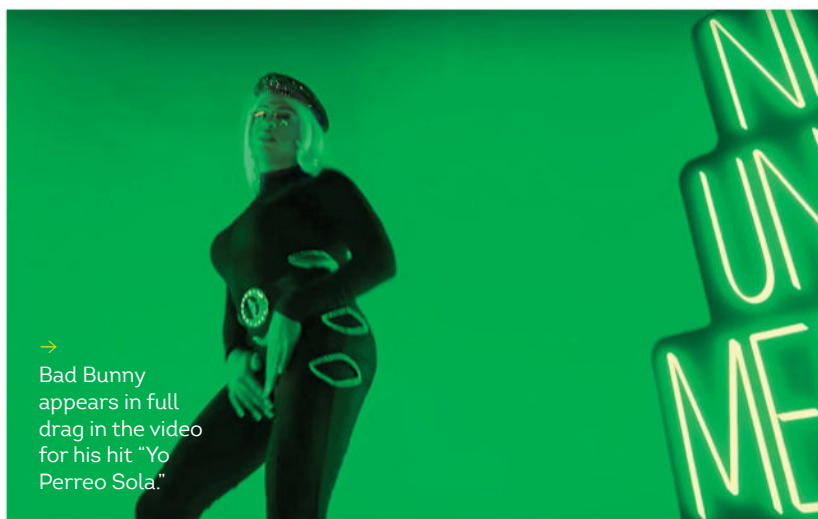
A large, diverse crowd of people is gathered at what appears to be a Puerto Rican festival or parade. In the foreground, a person wearing a bright pink hoodie and a white face mask stands with their right arm raised, holding a small Puerto Rican flag. To their right, a man in a black t-shirt with a Puerto Rican flag design is also holding a flag. The background is filled with many other people, some holding larger Puerto Rican flags, and one person is holding a wooden sign that says "VICTORIA". The overall atmosphere is festive and celebratory.

HUMAN

*The musician has become
a voice for social justice and
self-acceptance.* BY COLETTE CLAIRE



→ The video for “El Apagón” focuses on the struggles facing Puerto Rico’s citizens.



→ Bad Bunny appears in full drag in the video for his hit “Yo Perreo Sola.”

arts and sports” in Puerto Rico. The foundation led two relief initiatives after Hurricane Maria, including handing out meals and aiding in the reconstruction of homes. It also organized the first La Nueva Tradición (The New Tradition) event and distributed holiday gifts to 30,000 Puerto Rican children in December 2018, and has continued to do so in the years since.

The foundation has also teamed up with Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and singer Marc Anthony to help restore Little League baseball fields that were ravaged by hurricanes. On LISC’s website, Bad Bunny stated, “Our commitment is to rebuild these parks so that we can help new athletes grow. This is the first step for the rebirth of sports within the island.”

Additionally, the Good Bunny Foundation pledged \$1 million to Colin Kaepernick’s Know Your Rights Camp. The organization was launching two new efforts at the time, the Legal Defense Initiative that provides legal resources for those who have been victims of police brutality, and a COVID-19 Relief Fund.

In September 2022, during his World’s Hottest Tour, after Hurricane Fiona hit, Bad Bunny added QR codes to his concert wristbands that led to a list of charity organizations fans can donate to in Puerto Rico.

Bad Bunny has even gotten directly involved with politics thanks to his friend and fellow musician Residente. In January 2019, the pair visited Puerto Rico’s then governor, Ricardo Rosselló, to propose an audit of the island’s debt. Residente praised Bad

Bunny because “he’s connecting with a lot of young people but he’s also a guy who questions things.”

Not long after, private chats between Rosselló and his aides were leaked exposing episodes of homophobia, as well as derogatory remarks about hurricane victims. Around this same time, two former members of his administration were arrested on charges of fraud. This led to a large demonstration in July 2019.

This demonstration was the first one Bad Bunny ever attended, but he saw how important his involvement was, as it got the attention of major media outlets across the globe. “I am terribly proud of being Puerto Rican. That day [of the protest] it was, like... tripled,” he told *Rolling Stone* in 2020.

The artist also incorporates his activism into his music. He and Residente released a protest song during the time of the demonstrations called “Afilando los Cuchillos” (“Sharpening the Knives”). In it, he addressed Rosselló directly and the hypocrisy of his administration, which had claimed the language in songs from rappers like Bad Bunny was bad for Puerto Rican society, when, of course, their leaked chats were much worse. The lyrics proclaim, “This doesn’t have anything to do with bad language.... This is about your shameless lying to the people / About how you hid the dead.”

In 2018, Bad Bunny cemented his role as an ally for women with a powerful video for the song “Sólo de Mí.” In it, a woman is lip-synching to Bad Bunny’s voice, standing and staring starkly at the camera as she turns her head periodically to reveal an increasingly bruised face. The song has lyrics like “I’m not yours, I’m not anybody’s, I belong only to myself.”

Bad Bunny has also used his platform to become an important LGBTQ+ ally. In 2020, fellow Puerto Rican singer Ricky Martin (who came out in 2010) declared to *Rolling Stone* that Bad Bunny “has become an icon for the Latin queer community.... It is very refreshing to witness in

an industry known for its machismo.” Most recently, Bad Bunny was given the Vanguard Award at the GLAAD Media Awards in March 2023, for promoting the acceptance of LGBTQ+ people in Latinx culture.

In 2020, when Bad Bunny performed on *The Tonight Show*, he donned a T-shirt commemorating Alexa Negrón Luciano, a homeless transgender woman who was stalked and killed in Puerto Rico. The shirt read “THEY KILLED ALEXA. NOT A MAN IN A SKIRT.”

In the video for “Yo Perreo Sola,” released in 2020, Bad Bunny is dressed in full drag. Behind him a

AS YOU GROW AND MATURE, YOU START SEEING THE REALITIES OF MANY THINGS AND YOU START REALIZING THE POWER YOU HAVE AND HOW FAR YOUR VOICE CAN GO.” *Bad Bunny*

glowing neon sign reads: “NI UNA MENOS,” or “Not One [Woman] Less,” a feminist slogan used to protest gender-based violence. He told *Rolling Stone* that he hopes seeing the video will help men think twice before they hassle any woman or gender-nonconforming person. The video has over 500 million views.

In September 2022, Bad Bunny released the music video for his hit song “El Apagón” (“The Blackout”). About three minutes into the 22-minute-long clip, it morphs from a music video into an in-depth documentary report from freelance journalist Bianca Graulau, who is known for her coverage of Puerto Rico’s political issues.



← During his *Tonight Show* performance in 2020, the artist showed his support for Alexa Negrón Luciano, a transgender woman who was murdered.

KING OF THE

→
Bad Bunny captured the WWE's 24/7 Championship in February 2021.



RING

The artist has proven to be a very skilled wrestler, even capturing a WWE championship. BY COLETTE CLAIRE

I'VE NEVER SAT TO WATCH A RECORDING OF ONE OF MY CONCERTS. NEVER. BUT MY WRESTLING MATCH—I'VE WATCHED IT A HUNDRED TIMES." *Bad Bunny*



→ The singer jumps off the top rope at the Royal Rumble in 2021.

Bad Bunny is what one might call a Renaissance man. He's skilled in a lot of different arenas: music, acting and, perhaps most surprisingly, wrestling. While other celebs have tried their hand at the latter, he's impressed the WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment league) by putting in as much effort as a pro with his appearances.

The superstar singer has been a fan of the sport since he was a

child, so he took it very seriously. On *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* in November 2021, Bad Bunny discussed his unique experience in the ring: "I've always been, since I was a kid, a wrestling fan. And that was a dream come true." The musician also talked to *Rolling Stone* in 2020 about how the sport has influenced him: "Each [wrestler] has their way of being, and it's respected. They have long

hair, they can paint their face, [but] they're strong and powerful beings."

Bad Bunny made his debut in the WWE organization at its Royal Rumble event in January 2021. He came to sing his song "Booker T" accompanied by none other than the track's namesake, but was sucked into the drama later at that event when he got into it with The Miz. The latter overturned Bad Bunny's turntables, inspiring him to enter the ring and

WRESTLING HAS INFLUENCED ME A LOT.... THE STYLE, THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING A TRADEMARK MOVE OR PHRASE OR LOOK, AND ALWAYS REMEMBERING THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE."

Bad Bunny

distract Miz long enough for Puerto Rican wrestler Damian Priest to eliminate him and John Morrison from the free-for-all match.

The singer made quite a few appearances on WWE television events thereafter. He went on to beat Akira Tozawa for the 24/7 Championship belt in February 2021. Just moments after Tozawa pinned R-Truth backstage to capture the title, Priest slammed Tozawa into storage equipment, which gave Bad Bunny the chance to pin Tozawa and capture the crown. He held onto it for a month but decided to trade it back to R-Truth for some "Stone Cold" Steve Austin merchandise on a March 2021 episode of *Monday Night Raw*.

Bad Bunny also accompanied Priest to The Archer of Infamy's *Raw* debut match and helped him win against The Shaman of Sexy.

Later, he teamed up with Priest and challenged The Miz and John Morrison to a tag-team match during WrestleMania 37 in 2021.

Since then he's been publicly endorsed by wrestling veterans like Mysterio and Triple H. Another wrestling legend, The Undertaker, formed such a tight bond with Bad Bunny that he has even introduced the rapper at some of his concerts.

Fans were impressed by Bad Bunny's prowess in the ring during the WrestleMania 37 match. Toward the end of the battle, the music superstar and Priest body-slammed Miz and Morrison simultaneously before Bad Bunny jumped from the top rope to crossbody Miz for the tag-team match win.

The artist was never just a pretty face there for ratings, as he actually knew what he was doing. He pulled



Bad Bunny holds his own around the likes of tough guys Booker T and Triple H.



← The star celebrates with Damian Priest after a victory on WWE Raw in 2021.



→ "We hit it off immediately," Priest says. "We have a lot in common."

off moves like the suplex and "The Canadian Destroyer." Many commented on how it was obvious that he was a fan since childhood. According to Pitchfork, Bad Bunny "captured the subtleties of what makes an effective wrestling match: the pacing, the near falls, the selling of pain. He...lived out a childhood dream, left it all in the ring and elevated what a celebrity match could be in the process."

He eventually faced his toughest WWE match at Royal Rumble in January 2022. According to Sirius Radio's blog, "He won the hearts of fans by showing dedication and skill in the ring and even made it to the

final five of the 30-man match." He lasted almost eight minutes before being beaten by Brock Lesnar, but not before he impressively eliminated former world champions Dolph Ziggler and Sheamus.

On *The Tonight Show*, Bad Bunny made sure to mention the effort that goes into wrestling: "I spent like three months training, physically working

hard on my body and working on the technique in the ring. I mean, it's really physical stuff.... It's not an act." And he also mentioned how he still had bruises.

These WWE experiences also helped him land a coveted role in the Marvel Spider-Man spinoff movie coming in 2024, in which he'll play a wrestling superhero named El Muerto.



In addition to his music career, Bad Bunny is establishing himself as a fine actor. BY ROBERT HAM

SCENE

The success and cross-cultural appeal that Bad Bunny has reached in his still-young career has, as is the case with many popular musical artists, opened up many new doors and afforded him a wealth of new opportunities to stretch his talents far beyond the concert hall and the recording studio. Considering how charismatic he is onstage and off, is it any wonder that Bad Bunny has chosen to try his hand at acting in recent years?

"It's different, but at the same time, it's the same," he said of acting to Jimmy Fallon on *The Tonight Show* in 2021. "You have to work hard, to be responsible and respect your colleagues. I enjoy it. It's something new for me, but I like it, and I enjoy it."

To date, Bad Bunny's filmography is relatively slim compared to other multi-hyphenate performers. But the work he has picked up in recent years has been plenty substantial—and befitting a star like him.

His most prolific gig to date is his work on the popular Netflix series *Narcos: Mexico*. Bad Bunny joined the cast of this crime drama for its third and final season in 2021, and like many of his fellow actors on the

A LOT OF ARTISTS FAIL WHEN THEY TRY TO ACT.... SO WHEN I GET INTO ACTING, IT'S GOING TO BE TO DO IT WELL, SOMETHING GOOD, SOMETHING OF QUALITY."

Bad Bunny

show, he's playing a real-life member of a Mexican drug empire. In this case, he took on the role of Everardo Arturo "Kitty" Paez, a lieutenant in the Arellano Félix cartel who led a group of young traffickers dubbed the "Narco Juniors" that transported cocaine from Mexico into the U.S. in the late '80s and early '90s. As with much of *Narcos: Mexico*, fact and fiction are blurred as the third season of the show portrays the Narco Juniors more as well-to-do kids who were attracted to the thrills of the criminal lifestyle.

Bad Bunny is a big fan of the original *Narcos* and this spinoff, and that played a huge part in getting the gig on the series. He lobbied to be part of the third season, something that showrunner Carlo Bernard said sent some shock waves through the staff. "Everybody under 30 in



←
The singer does battle with Brad Pitt in the 2022 movie *Bullet Train*.

STEALER



←
Bad Bunny and his fellow cast members attend the LA premiere of the action film.



"I'm a good guy but it was fun," the star told Jimmy Fallon of playing his bad boy *Narcos: Mexico* character.

the office lost their s---," he told *Entertainment Weekly* in 2021. "He put himself on tape and—to no surprise—he's very watchable and you're innately drawn to him. Whatever we gave him, he killed."

Beyond that series, Bad Bunny's other most high-profile acting work to date was in the 2022 action-comedy *Bullet Train*. In the film, he plays The Wolf, a former hit man for a drug kingpin who is one of the many criminals and killers who tussle with Ladybug, a spy played by Brad Pitt.

In the scope of the movie, Bad Bunny's role is relatively slim, but he leaves one hell of an impression. As the story goes, The Wolf boards the titular bullet train seeking revenge. Years prior on his wedding day, his new bride and much of his family were poisoned, allegedly by Ladybug. While Pitt's character turns out not to be the culprit, he and The Wolf



↑ The third and final season of *Narcos: Mexico* premiered in November 2021.

engage in a thrilling bit of hand-to-hand combat within the close confines of a train car as it hurtles through Japan.

Bad Bunny says he was already intrigued by the part when the script for *Bullet Train* came across his desk, but it was another family member who helped seal his decision to sign on for the film.

"When [she] heard the name 'Brad Pitt,' my mom said, 'You have to say yes,'" the musician told ABC's *Nightline*.

Training for the highly choreographed fight scene between The Wolf and Ladybug took the better part of a week. But even with all that practice, things still went a little off the rails during filming as Bad Bunny accidentally hit Pitt in the face.

Pitt doesn't bear his co-star any ill will about the accident. In that same *Nightline* interview, the Oscar-winning actor praised Bad Bunny's work ethic. "We had two great days of fight scenes," Pitt said, "and Benito just jumped right in like a pro."

The feeling was mutual, said Bad Bunny. "Incredible. I was very excited. Mocionado. Proud because the experience was so good. The movie's amazing. Brad Pitt is [an] amazing guy. He was always so respectful and nice with me," he said to Zane Lowe on Apple Music.

While *Bullet Train* was Bad Bunny's first substantial film role, following a cameo in 2021's *F9* (part of the *Fast & Furious* movie series), critics seemed to be impressed by what they saw of the musician on screen. *USA Today* noted that while the artist "doesn't get a lot to do" in the movie, "He has the charisma and the moves to be a future action star."

In January 2023, it was revealed that Bad Bunny would expand his television and movie experience beyond acting, serving as the executive producer of Netflix's adaptation of Adam Silvera's bestselling young adult novel *They Both Die at the End*.



↑
Bad Bunny and Sony Pictures president Sanford Panitch attend CinemaCon 2022.

A MARVEL-OUS MILESTONE

THE LATINX SINGER WILL MAKE HISTORY AS THE STAR OF THE SPIDER-MAN SPINOFF *EL MUERTO*.

Fans may have been disappointed about how little Bad Bunny was featured in his first major big-screen role as an assassin in *Bullet Train*, but they will certainly get their fill of the multitalented artist when his next film hits theaters in 2024.

In April 2022, it was announced that Bad Bunny would be joining the Marvel Cinematic Universe as the title character in a new feature film called *El Muerto*. The movie is part of a further expansion of the prolific Spider-Man series starring Tom Holland as the famed web slinger, and centers on El Muerto, a Mexican wrestler who receives superpowers from his colorful costume. This move marks the first time

a Latinx superhero will get their own film in the MCU.

As with most everything Marvel is working on, details are scarce about the film beyond that. What they have revealed so far is that *El Muerto* will be directed by Jonás Cuarón, the son of Oscar-winning filmmaker Alfonso Cuarón.

The *El Muerto* announcement came in appropriately dramatic fashion during CinemaCon, where Bad Bunny made a surprise appearance and referenced his affiliation with World Wrestling Entertainment. "I love wrestling. I grew up watching wrestling and I'm a wrestler," he shared. "I'm a former champion, so this is why I love this character. I think it's the perfect role for me and it will be epic."

World

The year 2022 saw a return to normalcy in the music industry following shutdowns in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For Bad Bunny, it was the year to seize his growing popularity and drop his most ambitious album to date—the 23-song opus *Un Verano Sin Ti*, which translates to “A Summer Without You.”

Coming off the release of two disparate albums in 2020 (*YHLQMDLG* and *El Último Tour del Mundo*), Bad Bunny had already proven his versatility as an artist. The reggaetón and Latin trap of his early career was now complemented by dabblings in cumbia, indie pop, techno, neo-psychedelia...the list goes on. This post-genre, everything-but-the-kitchen-sink approach would broaden Bad Bunny’s potential audience base and—despite the lyrics still being in Spanish—increase the universal appeal of his music across multiple continents and language barriers.

Bad Bunny had conceived the concept for *Un Verano Sin Ti* as far back as the sessions for *YHLQMDLG*. It was a more premeditated project, and unlike his past albums—mostly surprise releases with little warning—there

DOMI



WHEN I WAS A LITTLE KID, MY FAMILY WOULD GO TO THE WEST ON VACATION.... THE ALBUM IS VERY CARIBBEAN, IN EVERY SENSE: WITH ITS REGGAETÓN, ITS MAMBO, WITH ALL THOSE RHYTHMS.”

Bad Bunny

←
The singer
performs during
his El Último
Tour Del Mundo
in Miami in
April 2022.

NATION

*As he releases his fourth album, **Un Verano Sin Ti**, the idol becomes arguably the biggest star on the globe.* BY JON HADUSEK



record, with an A and a B side that deliberately contrast in mood. The tracks comprising the first half of the album are more upbeat and intense, as evidenced by the opening reggaetón banger “Moscow Mule.”

In Bad Bunny’s own words, there’s a tangible party vibe to the first half, with “Tití Me Preguntó” fusing dembow, trap and psych into a genre-shifting workout, while highlights “Neverita” and the appropriately titled “Party” stick to tried-and-true reggaetón and Latin pop. Hints of EDM (“Tarot”) and mambo (“Después de la Playa”) are also present, with MAG, recurring Bad Bunny affiliate Tainy and La Paciencia handling the bulk of the production alongside Súbelo NEO, Albert Hype and more.



ALBERT HYPE



Andrea Ruiz Costas, who was murdered by her ex-boyfriend in Puerto Rico, is said to have inspired “Andrea,” a poignant standout track on *Un Verano Sin Ti* (top).

would be a proper promo push this time around, building up the hype.

“This is the first album I [announced] with anticipation,” Bad Bunny told podcaster Chente Ydrach. “The whole concept was a new year and new vibes. I wanted to announce the album when the year started because I was confident in the project I was doing and wanted to pressure myself to release it [in 2022].”

Conceptually, *Un Verano Sin Ti* functions like a classic vinyl

“The album starts with a lot of energy, a lot of perreo, mambo, dembow and suddenly there’s a bossa nova,” Bad Bunny told Ydrach. “It’s like when you go out to party, you’re excited but then you get drunk and sentimental.”

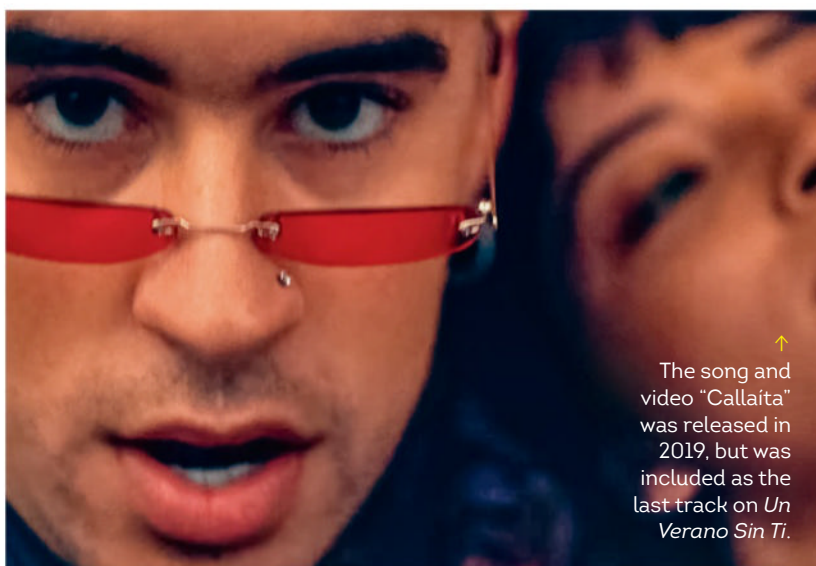
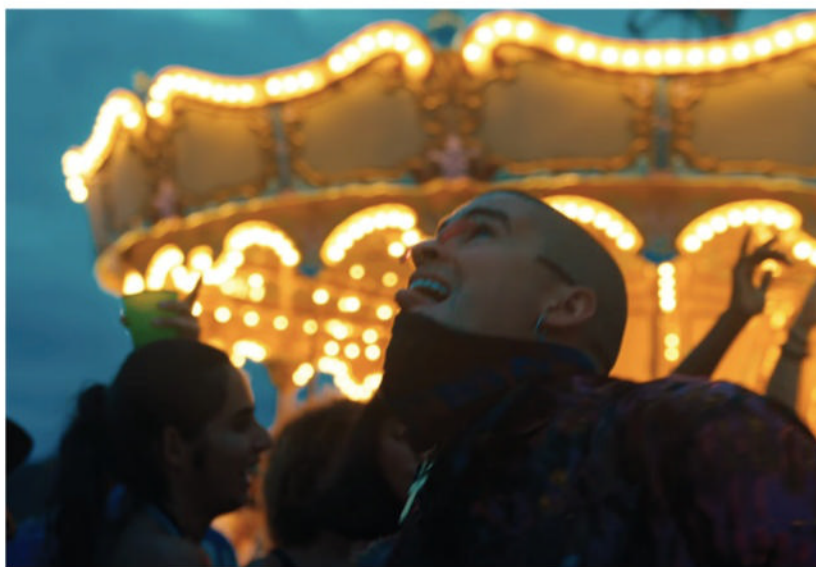
A defining moment on the latter half of the record is “Andrea” featuring synth-pop duo Buscabulla. The song was rumored to be loosely inspired by the viral story of Andrea Ruiz Costas, a Puerto Rican woman who

was murdered after being denied her petition for a restraining order against her ex-boyfriend. Although Bad Bunny stated that the song is a more general character study rather than specific to Ruiz, the lyrics could parallel her plight, and it's another example of female empowerment in his music.

"The song is about a woman who's still alive and with the desire to grow, be free, be respected and understood," he said. "Anyone could be an 'Andrea,' and I love how women are identifying with the song."

"Callaíta" is another female character study. Here, Bad Bunny tells the story of a shy girl who, after a few drinks, "unleashes her wild side." The Tainy-produced track was originally released as a single back in 2019, but was revived as a bonus track for *Un Verano Sin Ti*, as it musically and lyrically encapsulates Bad Bunny's concept of creating "a record to play in the summer, on the beach, as a playlist," as he told *The New York Times*.

Released in May 2022, *Un Verano Sin Ti* would effectively become



WITH BAD BUNNY... WHENEVER HE CALLS, WE ALREADY KIND OF KNOW WHERE HIS MIND IS GOING. WE KNEW THAT HE WANTED TO DO A SUMMERY TYPE OF VIBE [WITH THIS] ALBUM."

Producer Albert Hype

↑
The song and video "Callaíta" was released in 2019, but was included as the last track on *Un Verano Sin Ti*.



I FEEL IN CONTROL. I'VE BEEN DOING THIS FIVE, SIX YEARS, AND I'VE BEEN ACQUIRING EXPERIENCE.... I'M CLEAR ON WHAT I AM AND WHO I AM IN TERMS OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY."

Bad Bunny

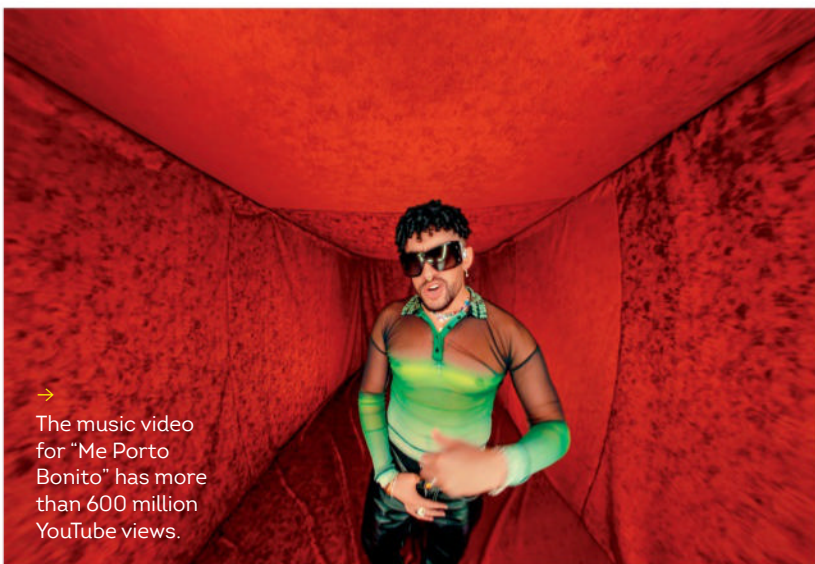


the album of the summer—and, for many, the entire year. Its upbeat energy and generally positive attitude seemed to resonate with a world that had finally returned to a relative sense of normalcy.

"*Un Verano Sin Ti* is not only a seasonal statement-piece but a testament to Benito's singular songwriting—across genres, generations and even languages, he works to produce enduring landmarks that trace universal joys, sorrows and passions," wrote AllMusic's David Crone in one of the many positive reviews the album received.

Commercially, *Un Verano Sin Ti* proved to be an overwhelming success, landing at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 in the U.S. and topping the Billboard Top Latin Albums Chart.

Meanwhile, four of the album's singles ("Moscow Mule," "Tití Me Preguntó," "Después de la Playa" and "Me Porto Bonito") would break the Top 10 on the Billboard Hot 100 songs chart in the U.S. The stateside success led to *Un Verano Sin Ti* being the first Spanish-language album to be nominated for the prestigious Album of the Year at the Grammys.



→ The music video for "Me Porto Bonito" has more than 600 million YouTube views.

All in all, 2022 was a banner year for Bad Bunny, perhaps only marred by an unfortunate encounter with an overeager fan around the New Year while in the Dominican Republic. The incident made headlines after the fan approached Bad Bunny to take a selfie, only to have him toss her phone into a nearby body of water. Despite the resulting backlash, the artist didn't apologize.

"Those who come to put a freaking phone in my face I will consider it for what it is, a disrespect, and I will treat it as is," he later tweeted.

If anything, it was a microcosm of Bad Bunny's now massive fame as arguably the most popular artist in the world. He had reached the top.



SPOT ON

HE HAS BEEN SPOTIFY'S MOST-STREAMED ARTIST FOR THREE YEARS IN A ROW.

Of all of Bad Bunny's achievements in 2022—the four Top 10 singles, the Grammy nod, etc.—his streaming stats are perhaps the most impressive of all.

For the third year in a row, Bad Bunny was Spotify's most-streamed global artist, notching a record-breaking 18.5 billion streams in 2022 (and the most ever in a 24-hour period with 183 million streams on May 6).

The final tally broke his own previous record for the most Spotify streams in a year and was numerical proof of the sheer amount of people listening to his music. When the record was initially broken back in July 2022 as Bad Bunny surpassed 10.3 billion streams, the rapper's

colleague and collaborator Drake took to Instagram to offer up his congrats.

"My guy is moving different," wrote Drake in a story post.

In addition to dominating Spotify, Bad Bunny was Billboard's top artist of 2022—the first Latin artist to garner that distinction—and he had the most "thumbed" songs on Pandora. *Un Verano Sin Ti* was also the top album of 2022 on Apple Music.

"Me Porto Bonito" was Bad Bunny's most-streamed song of 2022 on Spotify, pushing 1 billion streams, while "Titi Me Preguntó" was a close second. On YouTube, the music videos for each song were around 500 million views at the end of the year. The numbers are truly unprecedented.



←
The star performs in Inglewood, California, during his World's Hottest Tour in September 2022.

* TOP SONGS

→ Bad Bunny and J Balvin guested on Cardi B's No. 1 hit "I Like It."



← His early single "Soy Peor" helped establish him in the Latin trap scene.



HOT

A look at the singer's standout tunes from throughout his career.

TRACKS

→ Bad Bunny is a master in the recording studio, as seen in the video for "Dakiti."



The sheer amount of music that Bad Bunny has released in a relatively short period of time is mind-blowing. He has dozens of tunes in his discography, many of which have become huge hits, both in the Latin music scene and on the overall pop charts. While it's nearly impossible to narrow down his greatest hits, here are 10 songs that represent his immense talent and musical progression.

"DILES"

One of Bad Bunny's early SoundCloud tracks that caught the attention of DJ Luian and all of his connections, "Diles" is the one that truly started it all. Originally a self-produced synth-trap track made while Bad Bunny was still working bagging groceries, a mix by DJ Luian and Mambo Kingz featuring Arcángel, Ñengo Flow, Farruko and Ozuna really took off in a big way. In the song, Bad Bunny declares that his girl should tell all the other guys to get lost as his voice "drips honeyed, weeded, sensual nasty talk," according a review in *Rolling Stone*. While the young performer was still finding his style on this song, it was a clear indicator of the greatness to come.

"SOY PEOR"

The 2016 single "Soy Peor" helped establish Bad Bunny as a rising star in the Latin trap scene, as it was only his second song to break the Top 20 on Billboard's U.S. Latin chart. Produced by DJ Luian, the track features a slow, brooding beat and heavily auto-tuned vocals. At this point, Bad Bunny was sticking close to the trap sound prevalent at the time, but the personal nature of the lyrics would become a signature of the artist's music going forward. Here, he's been burned by a partner, declaring that he won't fall in love again and if he seemed mean before the breakup, he's even "worse" now. A 2017 remix features J Balvin, Ozuna and Arcángel.



A mix of Bad Bunny's 2016 track "Diles" by DJ Luian and Mambo Kingz, featuring Arcángel, Ñengo Flow, Farruko and Ozuna, kick-started his career.

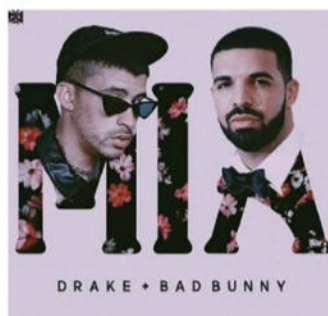
"I LIKE IT" (WITH CARDI B AND J BALVIN)

This is the track that really catapulted Bad Bunny to the big time. The fourth single from Cardi B's 2018 debut album, *Invasion of Privacy*, it became the first No. 1 hit for both J Balvin and Bad Bunny. Edgar Machuca, director of A&R at Atlantic Records, recommended them for the collaboration. In 2018, Bad Bunny told *Billboard*, "Making this song was like making music with my family.

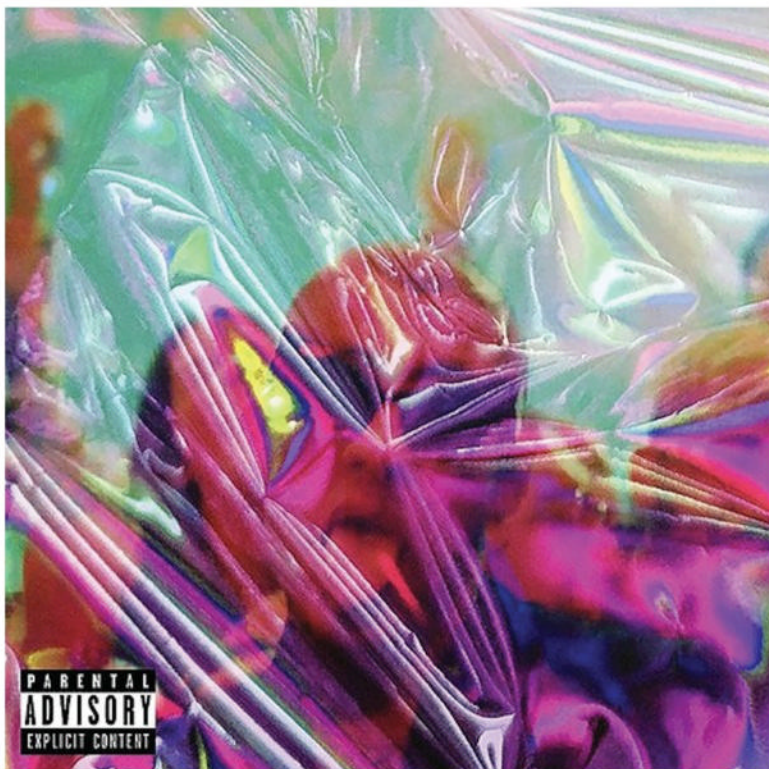
Latinos are very united." Cardi B added that Bad Bunny and J Balvin are "the biggest artists in the Latin market and for them to be on a record with me, I was super excited." The song features a catchy reworking of Pete Rodriguez's 1967 song "I Like It Like That" and is a banger on the dance floor.

"MIA" (FEATURING DRAKE)

Drake's emo-tinged trap was an influence on Bad Bunny's sound, especially early on in the latter's career. Given Drake's popularity, the fact that the two would eventually collaborate was a testament to Bad Bunny's own ascent in the world of pop music. The duo hit the studio for the 2018 single "Mia," and despite language barriers, recorded a Top 5 hit that would have been at home on either artist's album (with Drake rapping entirely in Spanish). Since then, Drake has been an outspoken supporter of Bad Bunny, congratulating him on his 2022 Spotify streaming record.



Bad Bunny and Drake's 2018 hit "Mia" went on to top the charts in Spain.



↑
The anti-sexual harassment message in “Sólo de Mi,” from the album *X 100pre*, was praised by NPR, who called the track “a ballad of independence.”

I WRITE SAD SONGS AT NIGHT. HAPPY SONGS I WRITE DURING THE DAY, AFTER WORKING OUT, AFTER A FUN DAY. AND SO I CAN ADAPT A LOT WHEN IT'S TIME TO WRITE. THAT'S THE PROCESS I LIKE.” *Bad Bunny*

“SÓLO DE MI”

The third single from his 2018 debut studio album, *X 100pre*, “Sólo de Mi” was not only a hit, but showed some of Bad Bunny’s depth of character with the somber piano keys, the slow-burning dembow rhythm and its message of self-determination. The song features lyrics like “I’m not yours, I’m not anybody’s, I



↑
“Yo Perreo Sola” won the Latin Grammy for Best Reggaetón Performance.

belong only to myself,” and the accompanying video supported Bad Bunny’s activism against domestic violence, as it features a progressively beaten woman lip-synching Bad Bunny’s vocal part. The song peaked at No. 6 on the U.S. Hot Latin Songs, and the video has hundreds of millions of views on YouTube.

“YO PERREO SOLA”

Translating to “I Dance Alone,” the 2020 single “Yo Perreo Sola” is a straight-ahead reggaetón track with a poignant message. As Bad Bunny told *Rolling Stone*, it’s “dedicated to those who desire to dance alone, and safely, at the club” and was written from the perspective of a woman. “I wanted a woman’s voice to sing it—‘yo perreo sola’—because it doesn’t mean the same thing when a man sings it,” he added, referring to the guest vocals from Puerto Rican trap artist Nesi. “But I do feel like that woman sometimes.” The song was praised for its firm stance against sexual harassment.

“DAKITI”

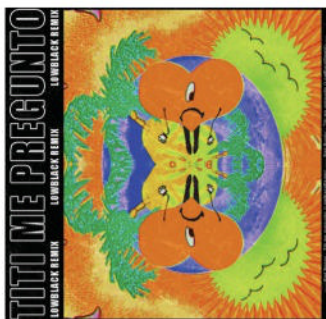
Released during the drab days of the pandemic in 2020, “Dakiti” stands as a creative high point in Bad Bunny’s discography. The spooky percolating beat is borderline darkwave synth—a pivot from the dancier dembow production of his past work. It just sounded right during the stay-at-home lockdown era, with Bad Bunny adding some effective contrast via the



↑
The single “Dakiti” features guest vocals from Jhay Cortez.

→
Bad Bunny is
suspended in
the air during
a performance
at the 2021
American
Music Awards
in Los Angeles.





↑
 “Titi Me Preguntó” became a Top 5 hit on the Billboard Hot 100 chart.

catchy chorus hook. The song credits include guest vocalist Jhay Cortez and a host of producers including Bunny, Cortez, Tainy and La Paciencia—more than usual for a Bad Bunny track (though he would go on to praise the combined effort for its success).

“TITÍ ME PREGUNTÓ”

Chosen by *Time* magazine as the Best Song of 2022, “Titi Me Preguntó” was the third single and one of many hits on Bad Bunny’s fourth studio album, *Un Verano Sin Ti*. This track stands out because of its experiments with “a full dembow beat,” and became a fan favorite “due to its fast-paced rhythm,” according to *Billboard*. Despite the revelry in his player ways, Bad Bunny is always just a little deeper than the average braggadocio. In the lyrics, auntie asks why he doesn’t settle down with one woman, to which he replies, “I’d like to fall in love/ But I can’t, but I can’t/ Sorry, I don’t trust, I don’t trust.”

“SAFAERA”

Despite some legal issues in a recently settled dispute with DJ Playero over samples in the song, “Safaera” is “a bold centerpiece” in Bad Bunny’s career, according to *Rolling Stone*. Featuring duo Jowell & Randy, as well as Ñengo Flow, the track is a genre-bending banger complete with a sample of Missy Elliott’s “Get Ur Freak On” and flawless transitions provided by Tainy, DJ Orma and Subelo NEO. “Safaera” truly demonstrates how much Bad

Bunny continues to evolve as an artist. With his rhymes, he spits the infectious lyrics, “Hoy se bebe, hoy se gasta” or “Today you drink, today you spend,” about letting it all go and having a good time.

“EL APAGÓN”

“El Apagón,” from 2022’s *Un Verano Sin Ti*, fuses reggaetón with house music and again sees Bad Bunny tackling sociopolitical issues rarely addressed in pop music and Latin trap. Here, he focuses on gentrification and the resulting power outages that occur in lower income areas when the grid is taxed, specifically back home in Puerto Rico. Rather than a standard music video, the song was notably accompanied by a 20-plus-minute documentary directed by Kacho Lopez Mari that incorporates reporting done by independent journalist

WHEN I WRITE... MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, MY LYRICS ARE PERSONAL, BUT I SOMETIMES HAVE TO PUT MYSELF IN OTHER PEOPLE'S SHOES.”

Bad Bunny

Bianca Graulau. The clip has been interpreted as Bad Bunny committing to his homeland and a call to action against the effects of gentrification as a result of wealthy foreigners.

—Colette Claire and Jon Hadusek



↑
 In the official visualizer for the single “Safaera,” a young boy listens to the track, which features a sample of Missy Elliott’s “Get Ur Freak On.”

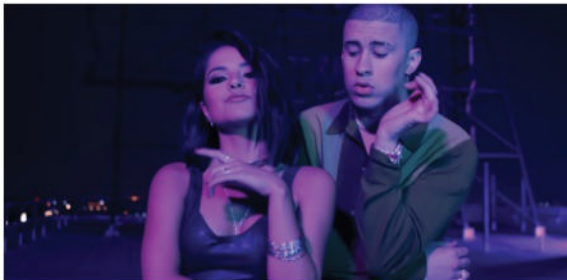
VIDEO STAR

HIS MUSIC VIDEOS HAVE RACKED UP BILLIONS OF VIEWS ON YOUTUBE.



“TE BOTE (REMIX)”

One of Bad Bunny’s first big breaks, the video for this track, also featuring Puerto Rican rappers Nio García, Darell and Casper Mágico, has over 2.3 billion views on YouTube and was declared one of their 50 most-viewed videos. It was directed with the sleek style of Fernando Lugo, who has helmed several of Bad Bunny’s videos.



“MAYORES” (WITH BECKY G.)

This 2017 summer jam has more than 2.2 billion views on YouTube. Filmed in Los Angeles, Bad Bunny vies for Becky G’s attention, while she adamantly declares her preference for older men. It appears she pushes Bunny aside for dancer (and former J. Lo flame) Casper Smart, but there’s a fun twist at the end.



“TITÍ ME PREGUNTÓ”

This clip, which boasts over 650 million views, seems like a normal party-vibe kind of music video, until the end where things take a wild turn. Bad Bunny is kidnapped with a bag over his head, thrown into a van, made to wear a tuxedo and show up at his own wedding to his real-life reported girlfriend at the time, Gabriela Berlingeri, who turns into an angel.



“YO PERREO SOLA”

With over 585 million views, this video is certainly iconic thanks to Bad Bunny’s appearance in full drag both in a red latex skirt set and a more frilly patterned dress, not to mention shots of him shirtless oiled up on a leash. He also protests gender-based violence with a sign that reads “No Una Menos” (“Not One [Woman] Less”).



“HOY COBRÉ”

Released in December 2020, this video is a fun ride, literally. In it, Bad Bunny strides atop a moving semitruck throwing out \$100 bills (with some help from CGI). There’s even a cameo from Snoop Dogg, who fires an employee for not letting Bad Bunny vape indoors, in this ode to getting paid and spending money. It has over 119 million views.

* STAGE PRESENCE

Tour de FORCE

The entertainer's live shows have earned hundreds of millions of dollars, including an all-time record in 2022. BY ROBERT HAM

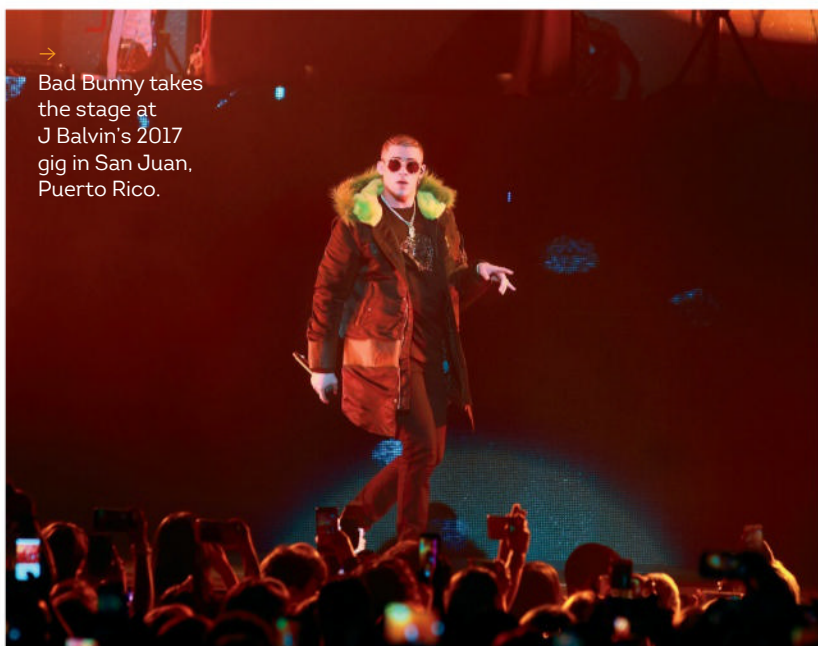


↑
Bad Bunny
performs in
New York City's
Madison Square
Garden in 2019.

→ The star shoots into the air during a show in London in 2018.



→ Bad Bunny takes the stage at J Balvin's 2017 gig in San Juan, Puerto Rico.



In 2018, as news dropped that “I Like It,” his blockbuster single with Cardi B and J Balvin, had hit the top spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, Bad Bunny responded with an effusive thank-you to his collaborators and fans along with one pointed message: “I already understand why [Donald] Trump wants to build a wall, it is because he knows that Latinos will conquer the world!”

So far, Bad Bunny’s prediction, at least in the pop culture sphere, seems to be coming to pass. Nowhere is that more evident than with the response to the four major concert tours that he has undertaken since his rapid rise. Each one has brought Bad Bunny’s fans out in droves, earning

→
A camera-ready crowd documents a 2019 Bad Bunny show in Miami.



him millions of dollars and tons of acclaim. And it has placed the Puerto Rican artist in the history books with his most recent run of shows. In 2022, he embarked on two tours—"El Último Tour del Mundo" and "The World's Hottest Tour"—which collectively raked in \$435 million. That total broke Ed Sheeran's record for the highest in a calendar year by any artist.

Impressively, Bad Bunny first reached world-shaking commercial success as a touring artist before he had even released a proper album. For his La Nueva Religion Tour in the fall of 2018, he sold out nearly half the dates on the

AT THE END OF THE DAY, MY SUCCESS IN THE UNITED STATES I OWE TO THE HARDWORKING LATINOS WHO HAVE HELPED MAKE THE COUNTRY WHAT IT IS TODAY."

Bad Bunny

strength of his numerous hits on the Hot Latin Songs chart and his energetic stage performance. As one *Billboard* reporter who caught Bad Bunny's sold-out performance at the Prudential Center in New Jersey put it, he "vigorously ripped through his set...with focus and a level of lightheartedness that charmed and captivated more than 19,000 fans."

His popularity on the live music circuit has exploded since that first jaunt. Bad Bunny undertook the impressive X 100Pre Tour that ran for the better part of 2019 and included stops at the main stage at Indio, California's Coachella, the Sónar Festival in Spain and Lollapalooza Paris. The tour opened with three

* STAGE PRESENCE

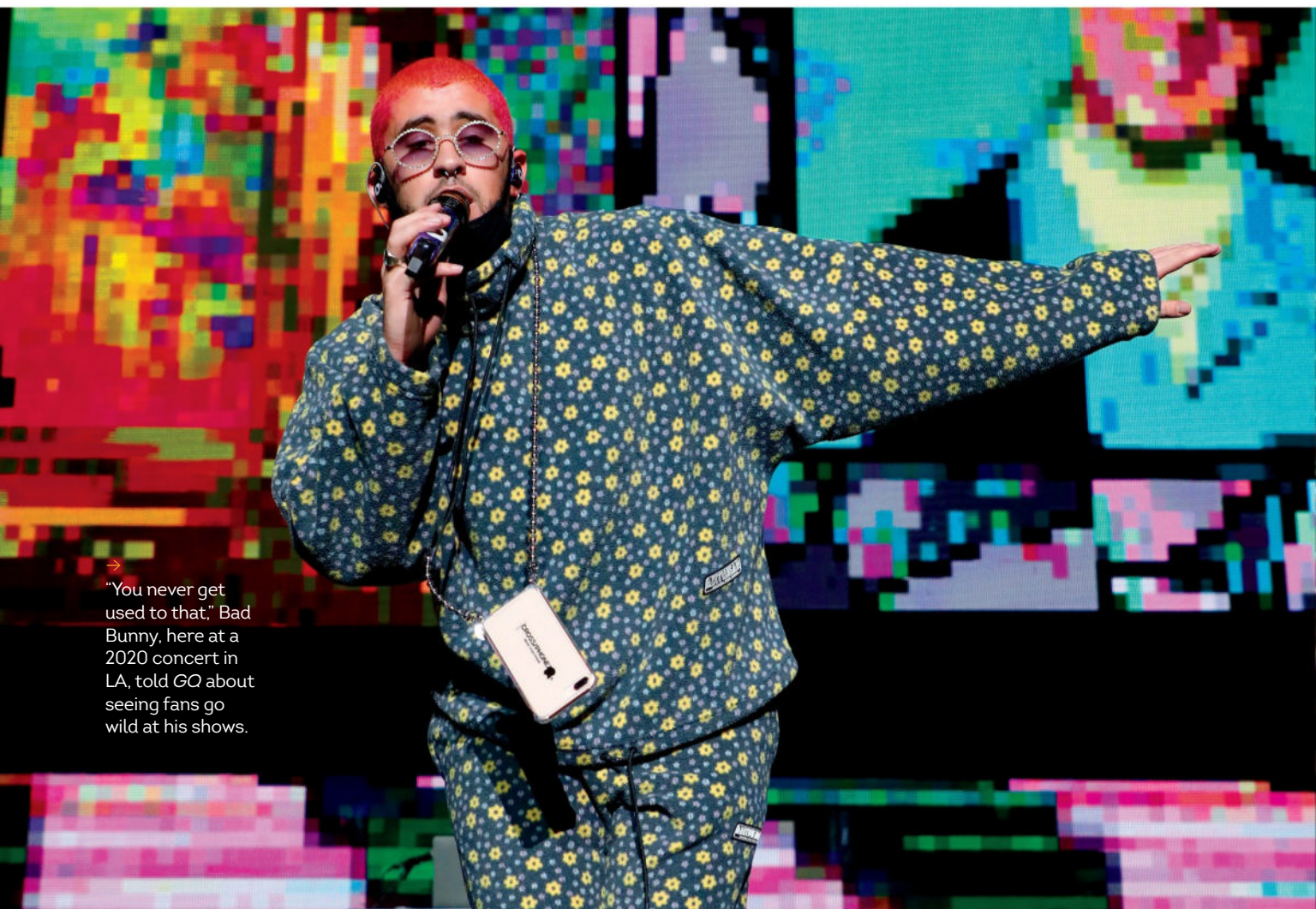
nights at Coliseo de Puerto Rico in San Juan, all of which sold out, before moving to North America, Latin America and Europe.

The shows were spectacular with Bad Bunny performing on a 360-degree stage in the middle of the arena and with all of his fans being fitted with LED bracelets that changed colors and patterns in sync with the music. Along the way, he also shone the spotlight on other Latin artists, bringing along J Balvin, Cazzu and Arcángel for special appearances throughout the tour.

If Bad Bunny's superstardom wasn't already established by that point, the two concert tours he launched in 2022 settled his place at the top of the pop universe. He



➔ An inflatable Bad Bunny head greets fans at a 2021 concert in Puerto Rico.



➔ "You never get used to that," Bad Bunny, here at a 2020 concert in LA, told *GQ* about seeing fans go wild at his shows.

announced El Último Tour del Mundo at 2021's WrestleMania 37, where he made his wrestling debut. It was an instant success with all 35 shows immediately selling out.

Befitting the size of the venues, his stage show was huge, involving a semitruck and pyrotechnics. Reporting from the tour's opening night, Consequence critic Kori Hazel was awestruck by the energy in Denver's Ball Arena, calling the show "a rambunctious testament to a Latin artist who is uncompromising in putting Spanish music on a pedestal, and in letting the world know that it's his way or the highway."

Seeing the fan response to El Último Tour del Mundo, Bad Bunny wasted no time in setting his sights

even higher. In early 2022, he announced The World's Hottest Tour, a stadium outing that once again took him all over North America and Latin America.

"What we saw," touring agent Jbeau Lewis said in late 2022, "[was] ...demand being off the charts. When you look at a ticketing queue for a show that can hold 17,000 and there's 300,000 in the queue, it certainly suggests there's a lot more meat on the bone to be had."

While a triumph, The World's Hottest Tour was not without its issues. A significant number of fans were denied entry to the last two dates at Mexico's Estadio Azteca after Ticketmaster was found to have oversold the venue and issued

hundreds of duplicate tickets. A consumer protection agency in Mexico fined the ticketing giant for nearly 10% of the revenue it earned in the country.

Following the ticket snafu, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador asked Bad Bunny to play a free concert for the fans who were shut out of the concerts. While it wasn't Mexico, Bad Bunny did play a free concert at a gas station in Puerto Rico to close out the year.

After setting records in 2022, Bad Bunny was announced as one of the headliners of Coachella 2023 in April, making him the first Latino artist and first Spanish-language performer to ever headline the largest music festival in North America.

→
A massive audience watches the artist's 2022 show in Monterrey, Mexico.



THE FIRST TIME I SANG IN FRONT OF 50, 60, 90 PEOPLE, I FELT BIG. I WAS HAPPY. SO THESE STADIUMS, I ENJOY THEM IN THE SAME WAY I ENJOYED SINGING...FOR 100 PEOPLE."

Bad Bunny



→
The star and Gabriela Berlingeri attend the 2021 Billboard Latin Music Awards in Coral Gables, Florida.



BUNNIES?

The rapper reportedly dated Gabriela Berlingeri but may have moved on. BY COLETTE CLAUDE

Bad Bunny doesn't like limiting himself with labels. This is obvious in his music, his style and, evidently, his relationship with Gabriela Berlingeri, a jewelry designer whom many in the press had referred to as his girlfriend.

In July 2022, during an Instagram livestream, he unexpectedly invited fans to ask questions. It was inevitable that someone asked if Berlingeri was his girlfriend since the world had been wondering this for some time. His ambiguous answer, as translated to English by Telemundo's website, was: "You guys do not know

anything. Gabriela and I are intimate friends, we are best friends.... If she wants to have a boyfriend, she can have one.... Same for me, if I find a girlfriend, I can have one."

This response raised more questions than answers. Were they polyamorous? Were they friends with benefits? Did they date, break up and remain friends afterward? Tracing their relationship over the past five or so years, whatever it may be, Berlingeri has certainly been an important part of Bad Bunny's life.

In his first *Rolling Stone* cover story interview conducted during

the summer of 2020, he discussed meeting Berlingeri in 2017 at a restaurant in Puerto Rico while eating dinner with his family. He then went on to mention how they were spending the pandemic lockdown together: "Do people really think I'm spending quarantine alone? No! I am with someone, she is very special in my life."

Rolling Stone writer Suzy Exposito asked what made Bad Bunny decide to go public with Berlingeri in scantily clad Instagram videos they had recently posted together. "I am happy with her. [People] don't know she has helped me a lot in emotional aspects when I needed it the most," the artist shared.

[GABRIELA BERLINGERI] HAS ALWAYS BEEN A BIG PART OF MY PROJECTS, MY IDEAS, BEHIND EVERYTHING. I ALWAYS ASK FOR HER IDEAS, HER OPINION, AND SHE'S AN IMPORTANT PART."

Bad Bunny

In March 2020, just a month after Bad Bunny and Berlingeri were first photographed together in public during a Miami Heat game, *Entertainment Tonight* asked him if there was someone special in his life. He replied that he's "in love" and left it vaguely at that.

A month later, the pair teamed up on "En Casita," a ballad about being unable to visit a lover due to quarantine. The two sing together on the track and the video opens with Berlingeri and Bad Bunny passionately kissing while he is dressed in full drag. Later in the video, they are shown playfully making Instagram videos together.

The two were first photographed sharing a red carpet together in September 2021 at the Billboard



Bunny attends a Jan. 20, 2023, LA Lakers game with rumored new girlfriend Liana Bell (inset, from her Instagram).

Latin Music Awards. In January 2022, Bad Bunny finally joined TikTok to the delight of his fans, and Berlingeri pops into frame to give him a kiss toward the end of his very first TikTok video.

The ending of the video for his song “Tití Me Preguntó” in June 2022 depicts Bad Bunny being kidnapped and taken to a wedding where he is marrying Berlingeri, who descends from the sky like an angel to greet him at the altar. Fans can decide what this symbolism means.

More artistic collaborations would follow, like on “El Apagón” (“The Blackout”) from Bad Bunny’s 2022 album *Un Verano Sin Ti*. The rapper told *The New York Times* in May 2022 that he specifically wrote lyrics for Berlingeri to sing because, “This is a song from the heart. I didn’t want to get a famous artist. I wanted someone to sing it out of love, because it’s a sincere message.” The tune is about the frequent power outages in Puerto Rico due to hurricanes and fires.

Over Thanksgiving weekend in 2022, fans began to speculate about a breakup when they noticed that Berlingeri had removed many of her photos with Bad Bunny from her Instagram account. However, on Dec. 15, Berlingeri shared a post that included photos of her performing her part in “El Apagón” onstage with Bad Bunny in Mexico City during the final stop of his World’s Hottest Tour. She also included videos of her getting the red heart from the *Un Verano Sin Ti* album cover tattooed on her hip, plus a behind-the-scenes video of the pair recording their vocals for “El Apagón.”

Sadly, though, it looks like things may in fact be over. In January 2023, he was spotted at a Lakers game with 22-year-old Liana Bell, who was first noticed by fans dancing onstage at his recent concert in Phoenix, according to Spanish newspaper *La Opinión*. Fans also noticed Berlingeri deleting more Bad Bunny photos off of her Instagram around the same time he was seen at the NBA game with Bell.



Berlingeri and Bad Bunny embrace at the 2021 Latin Grammy Awards in Las Vegas.

STYLE ICON

The trendsetter's looks are cutting-edge. BY COLETTE CLAIRE

↑
Bad Bunny wore a
stunning Burberry
boilersuit at the
2022 Met Gala.



He's not afraid to add accessories to his look, including this third eye that appeared at the 2018 American Music Awards.

Bad Bunny's penchant for pushing boundaries extends into his style. The way he dresses and presents himself is eclectic and modern; it's both masculine and feminine; it's a little bit rock star, a little bit classic, all at once. His gender-nonconforming style can go from a puffy sports jacket and sweats one minute to a plaid midi skirt and black mesh top the next.

In March 2019, he told *GQ* that there are people who appreciate his gender-neutral style and people who criticize it. Some say, "Thank you for sticking up [for us]...[but] there's others that say I'm an opportunist." However, Bad Bunny's stylistic choices go way beyond following contemporaries like Harry Styles and Kid Cudi, or originators like David Bowie and Prince. According to CNN in November 2019, his fashion choices



→ He's proud in purple at the 2018 Billboard Latin Music Awards in Las Vegas.



↑ Bunny has a blue moment at the 2021 Billboard Latin Music Awards in Florida.

**I'M TAKING
ADVANTAGE OF
THIS MOMENT
IN MY LIFE
WHEN I CAN
DO WHATEVER
I WANT AND
WEAR WHAT
I WANT, SO I
GET TO LIVE
LIFE MORE
AUTHENTICALLY
.... I JUST KNOW
WHO I AM."**

Bad Bunny



→
He looks lovely in lilac at the 2019 Billboard Latin Music Awards in Las Vegas.

* FASHION FORWARD



↑
His futuristic and fashionable look at the 2019 Latin Grammy Awards in Las Vegas was far-out!

are framed within a Latin tradition of masculinity, “where men are often taught from a young age to avoid anything even slightly feminine.”

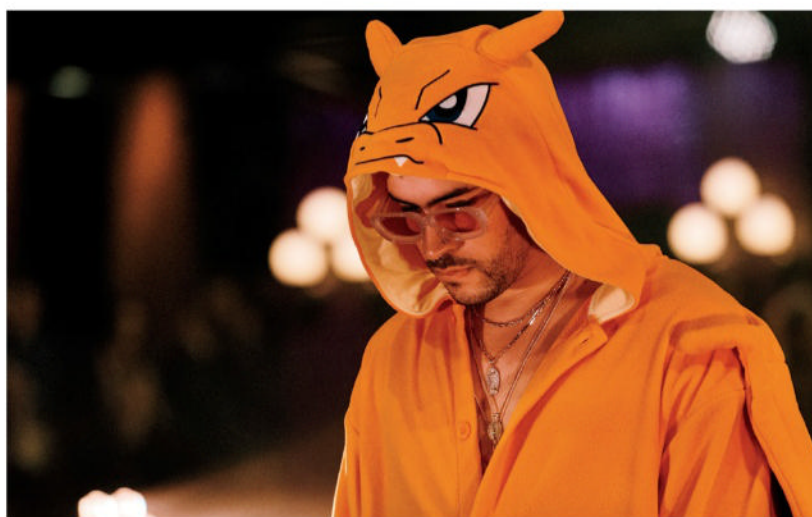
Thus, his style provides a role model for an alternative expression of Latin masculinity, style and identity. Bad Bunny told *Allure* in early 2022, “People before me have done what I do, breaking rules and pushing boundaries.... But maybe I got here at the right time. With the right force... everything aligned.”

As *Rolling Stone* put it in 2020, Bad Bunny “flaunts his nonconformity so that [others] no longer have to hide.” And in October 2020, *The New York Times* declared, “Like Dennis Rodman and Prince before him, Bad Bunny knows his femme flamboyance serves a disruptive public function.”

His willingness to challenge the norm is exemplified in many of his music videos, like “Si Tu Novio Te Deja Sola,” his 2017 collaboration with J Balvin, in which Bad Bunny dons an all-pink button-up shirt with tiny pineapples patterned all over it and tinted sunglasses with two iguanas perched on his shoulder.

“Caro” from 2019 is another example. At the beginning, he sits in a baby-blue room with pink curtains as a woman paints his nails. He then transforms into a young woman who is depicted in Bad Bunny’s closet wearing his masculine outfit of a boxy bright yellow jacket and green wraparound sunglasses. She then plays Bad Bunny’s role throughout most of the video.

Other clips feature similarly bold choices. In fact, he’s even gone full drag on a few occasions such as 2020’s “Yo Perreo Sola” video. Bad Bunny made it clear to *Rolling Stone* that year that he did drag with “lots of respect and the best intentions. I’m not gay, but I’m a human who cares.” His cousin got him into drag after they came to Bad Bunny asking for music ideas for drag shows. Latinx LGBTQ+ icon Ricky Martin declared that he loves the “Yo Perreo Sola” video: “[It’s]



From top: Bad Bunny wears a black leather jacket and plaid skirt at a concert in 2022; the artist dresses as the Pokémon character Charizard on *The Late Late Show With James Corden* in March 2020; he dons a yellow hood during a Good Bunny Foundation charity event in Puerto Rico in December 2022.

fun, sexy and if it's done by Bad Bunny, it has to be provocative."

Even while on lockdown in Puerto Rico due to the COVID pandemic, Bad Bunny looked chic with a sporty but luxurious combination. During a Zoom call with *Rolling Stone* in the summer of 2020, he appeared on camera wearing a stack of gold chains and pearls over a WWE T-shirt with wrestler Sting on it and a large pair of Gucci glasses.

Bad Bunny, of course, always has his own unique take on a black-tie event. For example, on the red carpet at the Billboard Latin Music Awards in 2018, he rocked a purple brocade suit with a gold-studded lapel.

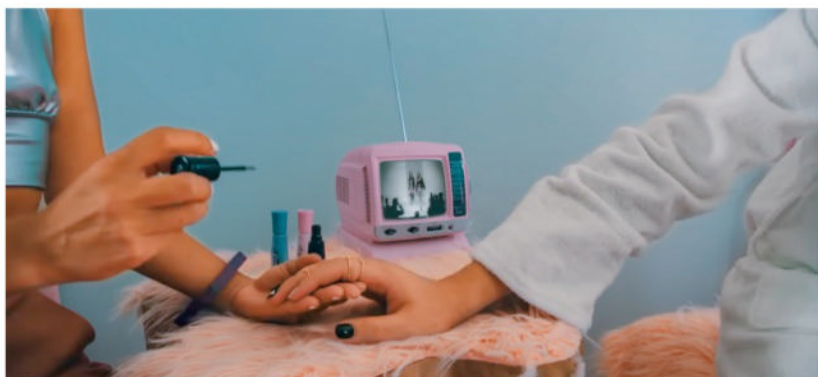
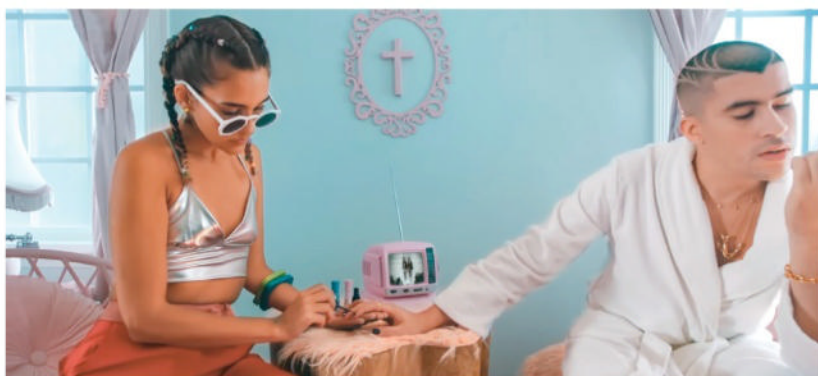
At the same event in 2021, he sported a light-blue suit and white dress shoes with a thick black sole, gold jewelry and orange sunglasses. Both outfits highlighted urban flair presented in a classical way.

José Forteza, a senior editor at *Vogue + GQ Mexico*, explained, "Bunny embraces the femininity that all men carry within." He has a knack for combining masculinity and femininity and making it something nonbinary—much like the outfit he posted on Instagram after a Buscabulla concert in June 2022, where he dons a leather jacket over a see-through shirt and plaid miniskirt.

An amazing example of this masculine and feminine combination is the outfit Bad Bunny wore for his big debut at the Met Gala in May 2022. The theme was "The Gilded Age," and the performer had his own take on it, collaborating with Burberry's Riccardo Tisci. The singer told *Vogue* of his Met Gala outfit: "I researched what was going on during the Gilded Age in my country, in Puerto Rico. We mixed the men's looks with women's," which were puffed collars for the women and tailored suits for the men. The combination had Bad Bunny appearing at the Gala in a blue collared shirt and black tie under a cream-colored, wool-linen boilersuit with puffed shoulders and a detachable reconstructed skirt. Derby shoes with brogue detailing and his hair in a mini bouffant with jeweled accessories completed the look.

Bad Bunny was also the gender-nonconforming star of French fashion house Jacquemus' 2022 "Le Splash" Spring Campaign. He appeared in the ads modeling a number of bold pieces from both the menswear and womenswear collections, including a baby-pink linen minidress, citrus hued slouchy suits, knitwear and even a pair of pastel blue heels.

The music star knows how to dress appropriately for the occasion, too. In contrast to his red-carpet looks, or music video flair, at his annual gift-giving charity event in December 2022, he was spotted in a casual look with a black hoodie, black cargo pants with light-blue detail, a pair of



↑

In his video for "Caro," Bad Bunny is seen getting his nails painted. On the eve of the clip dropping in 2019, the artist took to Twitter with a clear message: "homophobia at this point? what a shame crazy."



↑
He was a vision
in puffy yellow at
the 2018 Macy's
Thanksgiving Day
Parade in New York.



↑
Bunny was comfortable in green tie-dye at a 2022 concert in Orlando, Florida.



← He's beach-ready alongside J Balvin in the "Si Tu Novio Te Deja Sola" video.

white sneakers and a bright yellow balaclava as he posed with children at the event sponsored by his Good Bunny charity foundation.

The artist also has a special knack for combining more casual pieces like T-shirts, sportswear, straw hats and beanies with more designer pieces. A good example of this was in March 2022, when he went to a Brooklyn Nets game dressed in an off-white

I ALWAYS REMEMBER SEEING THE PIECES IN WOMEN'S CLOTHING, AND THEY WOULD ALWAYS FIT ME SO MUCH BETTER, AND THEY HAD SO MUCH DIFFERENT VARIETY."

Bad Bunny



→ The star went full drag in a red-hot latex outfit in the "Yo Perreo Sola" video.

suit worn playfully open at the neck. On his feet were ostentatious white platform shoes while a light-blue Chanel handbag sat next to him on the floor. He tied it all together with a much more demure outback-shape straw hat and Marine Serre-brand face mask. These accessories gave him a little anonymity, at least until they showed him on the Jumbotron, much to the audience's excitement.

At the 2023 Grammys, he sported a backward cap, T-shirt and blue jeans. Whether dressed up or casual, Bad Bunny always brings his unique sense of style to every outfit he wears.

* EYES ON THE PRIZE

↓
The artist takes
a selfie with fans
at the 2017 Latin
Grammy Awards
in Las Vegas.

DEEPLY HONOR



ED

Bad Bunny has won numerous awards during his remarkable career. BY ROBERT HAM



Bad Bunny accepts the award for Best Música Urbana Album (for *Un Verano Sin Ti*) at the 65th annual Grammy Awards in Los Angeles in February 2023.

For an artist who has only been in the public eye for less than a decade, Bad Bunny has managed to amass quite a collection of trophies and honors.

Of course, the accolades didn't arrive right away, as it took some time for his sales, streams and fan base to grow large enough for nominating committees to catch on. Now that they have, the performer has become one of the most decorated in recent pop music history.

Perhaps the biggest honors Bad Bunny has received have come from the Latin Grammy Awards. In 2019, he was handed his first statue, when *X 100pre* was named Best Urban Music Album. He has won that particular award twice more while also winning six other times, including

Best Reggaetón Performance in 2020 for "Yo Perreo Sola" and in 2022 for "Lo Siento BB:/" his collaboration with Tainy and Julieta Venegas; Best Urban Song and Best Urban/Fusion Performance in 2022 for "Titi Me Preguntó;" and Best Rap/Hip Hop Song in 2021 for "Booker T."

Bad Bunny has also found himself nominated for several Grammy Awards since 2019. His first win was in 2021 when *YHLQMDLG* was named Best Latin Pop or Urban Album, with the second coming a year later for *El Último Tour Del Mundo*, which won for Best Música Urbana Album. Bad Bunny even made history at the 2023 Grammys, landing the first ever Album of the Year nomination for an all-Spanish language LP (*Un Verano Sin Ti*). While he didn't win that

He got the 2023 Grammys party started with a festive performance of "El Apagón" and "Después de la Playa."



award, he triumphantly kicked off the Feb. 5 ceremony with a high-energy performance that had the A-list crowd on its feet. Moments later, his name was called to take home the honor for Best Música Urbana Album.

"It's easy because I just made this album with love and passion, nothing else," Bunny shared upon receiving the prize. "And when you do things with love and passion, everything is easier, the life is easier."

Bad Bunny has also dominated at the Latin American Music Awards, the Spanish-language counterpart to the American Music Awards. After being proclaimed Artist of the Year in 2018, he went on to run the table in 2021, picking up Artist of the Year, Favorite Male Artist and Favorite Urban Artist while grabbing a statue for Album of the Year for *YHLQMDLG*. When it comes to the American Music Awards proper, Bad Bunny has had plenty of success there as well, winning three Favorite Male Latin Artist awards and three Favorite Latin Album awards.

Bad Bunny has also had a strong showing at the Billboard Latin Music Awards, racking up an incredible 10 wins in 2021 alone, including Artist of the Year, thanks to the continued chart success of his album *YHLQMDLG*. The next year, he took



→
He holds his trophy for Best Urban Album at the 2019 Latin Grammy Awards.



← Bad Bunny swings big at Yankee Stadium during the 2022 MTV VMAs.

TV SPOTLIGHT

THE RAPPER HAS DELIVERED SEVERAL MEMORABLE SMALL-SCREEN PERFORMANCES OVER THE YEARS.

Bad Bunny knows very well how to make an impression on people, even if they aren't listening to his music. His dazzling album covers and wild stage sets for his tours are proof positive of that, but another great way to experience his visual acumen is to check out his best performances on TV.

One of the most talked about was one of his first big TV appearances of his career at the 2018 American Music Awards. Performing "I Like It" with rapper Cardi B and his buddy J Balvin, Bad Bunny was rolled onstage in a tricked-out shopping cart. Even better: The trendsetter was sporting a fake third eye for the evening.

Equally beloved was Bad Bunny's 2021 performance on *Saturday Night Live*, especially his duet with Rosalía, "La Noche de Anoche," which found the pair getting snugly amid a smoke-filled floor and a backdrop of modernist art.

On a grand scale, his performance at Yankee Stadium was aired during the 2022 MTV VMAs.

And in 2023, the superstar had the prestigious honor of opening the Grammys with a dynamic performance of "El Apagón" and "Después de la Playa." Fellow nominees like Taylor Swift, Lizzo and others in the audience were on their feet, as Bad Bunny brought the spirit of Puerto Rico to the Grammy stage.

home nine more awards. As for the Billboard Music Awards, he's seemed to secure a permanent spot in the Latin music categories. He's been named Top Latin Artist for three years, and, in 2021, had three albums nominated for Top Latin Album.

For awards given to an artist based solely on how much fans engage with their music, Bad Bunny's locked down plenty. In 2020, he received a half dozen Spotify Awards, honors given to artists based on their streaming performance. He was also named Spotify Artist of the Year and Most Streamed Male Artist—not a small feat considering the options available to subscribers of the service. He's been similarly recognized for radio airplay of his work, with the iHeartRadio Music Awards naming him Latin Artist of the Year in 2019 and Latin Pop/Reggaetón Artist of the Year in 2022.



↑ Bunny accepts an honor at the 2019 MTV Millennial Awards in Mexico City.

Music fans also make up 50% of the voting bloc for the ASCAP Latin Awards (the rest is from critics). With their support, a few dozen Bad Bunny songs, including “La Dificil” and his duet with Drake, “Mia,” have won statues, and, in 2019, his Cardi B collaboration “I Like It” was proclaimed Song of the Year.

Online voters have spoken frequently with regards to the Premios Juventud awards that are handed out to Spanish-speaking artists by cable TV’s Univision. The prize names are a little kitschy, but Bad Bunny’s accepted awards for Trendsetter, Scroll Stopper and OMG Collaboration with grace and poise. Univision also presents the Lo Nuestro Awards, which recognize the work of Latin musicians every year since 1989. Bunny has been given an impressive number of their statues—seven of them in 2021 alone.

If all that weren’t enough, he also nabbed two Best Caribbean Act statues at the MTV Europe Music Awards. And the network’s honors for Latin artists, the MTV Millennial Awards, bestowed “La Noche de Anoche,” his collaboration with Rosalía, the top prize of Video of the Year in 2021. Then he was named Artist of the Year at the 2022 MTV VMAs after his performance at New York City’s hallowed Yankee Stadium.

“Last night is one of the times I’ve felt biggest in my entire career,” he told *Billboard* the following morning. “The award was American; the place was the most American place you can think of—Yankee Stadium,” he shared. “I felt big onstage, the moment felt big, and there’s few moments that, even though they’re big, feel bien grande [so big].”

**THAT I COULD
BECOME ONE
OF THE BIGGEST
STARS IN
THE WORLD
WITHOUT
HAVING TO
CHANGE MY
CULTURE,
MY LANGUAGE,
MY JARGON...
TO THE
WHOLE WORLD,
THANK YOU!”**

Bad Bunny



↑ He expresses gratitude for his win at the 2021 Grammy Awards in Los Angeles.



↑ He looks sharp as he nabs an award at the 2021 Latin Grammy Awards in Las Vegas.



↑ Bunny wins two trophies at the 2021 American Music Awards in Los Angeles.

For the REC

A look at some of the superstar's most notable milestones.



18.5
billion

THE NUMBER OF
STREAMS BAD BUNNY
HAD ON SPOTIFY IN
2022, MAKING HIM THE
MOST LISTENED TO
ARTIST OF THE YEAR

\$435
million



THE TOTAL TICKET
SALES OF HIS 2022
CONCERTS, THE
HIGHEST AMOUNT
EVER BY ANY
ARTIST IN A SINGLE
CALENDAR YEAR

3/10/1994

The date Benito Antonio
Martínez Ocasio
(now known as Bad
Bunny) was born in the
Almirante Sur barrio of
Vega Baja, Puerto Rico

ORD

1.5 BILLION

The number of views the video for "I Like It" (Cardi B, Bad Bunny & J Balvin) has on YouTube

\$88

million

HIS EARNINGS LAST YEAR, WHICH PUT HIM AT NO. 10 ON FORBES' LIST OF HIGHEST-PAID ENTERTAINERS OF 2022, JUST BELOW TAYLOR SWIFT'S \$92 MILLION

4

All four of Bad Bunny's studio albums made the year-end Billboard 200 chart in 2022: *Un Verano Sin Ti* (No. 1), *YHLQMDLG* (36), *El Último Tour del Mundo* (69) and *X 100pre* (165)

5'11"

Bad Bunny's height, about 4.5 times the length of an average rabbit



BACKING



**CONGRATULATIONS
ON ALL YOUR
SUCCESS. YOU'RE
DOING REALLY
AWESOME RIGHT
NOW. I LOVE IT."**

Jennifer Lopez



DADDY YANKEE

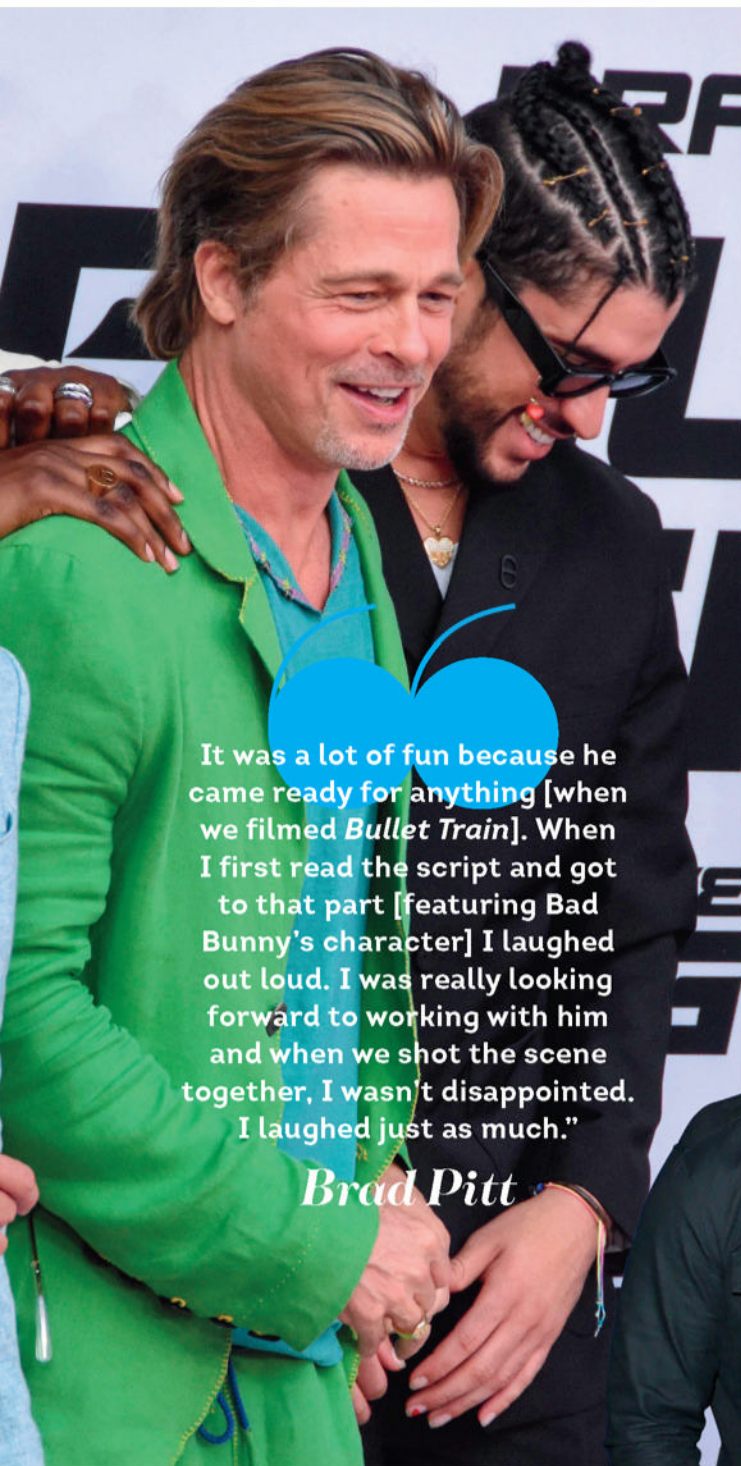
"Bad is a tremendous artist, a superstar, a phenomenon.

Does he want to be the leader of a movement? I would love it. There is no better person to take that position and he is showing it. But that is what I mean.

He is going through an incredible moment right now and what I like about Bad is that Bad has never been selfish and because of those good attributes I see him as a good leader. Every time he sings, he records with someone, he brings someone new, he records in another country. At his good moment he is sharing his platform with new and veterans.... Without a doubt Benito has the attributes."

BUNNY

Fellow musicians and celebrities sing the talented artist's praises.



It was a lot of fun because he came ready for anything [when we filmed *Bullet Train*]. When I first read the script and got to that part [featuring Bad Bunny's character] I laughed out loud. I was really looking forward to working with him and when we shot the scene together, I wasn't disappointed. I laughed just as much."

Brad Pitt

"Bad Bunny, especially, is doing an outstanding job and just telling people, 'Who cares if I paint my nails? Who cares if I am gay or if I'm not?' He's not, but he's a super-powerful ally that we need to support. We will forever be grateful, because we need them. They are an important part of our history, allies are. I appreciate it. That's why I needed to work with him."



RICKY MARTIN

J BALVIN

"Benito, you and I are different, but at the same time, very similar. We're not afraid of being seen as strange, because it seemed for a moment that I was the only weird one here until you came along and we recorded together for the first time.... Congrats, Benito. I'm proud of your success."

CARDI B

"The way that [Bad Bunny] has transitioned into fashion, the way that he dressed in drag in his music video [for "Yo Perreo Sola"] even though Hispanic culture can be a little homophobic. He took that chance, and instead of hurting his career, it made him bigger."



YOU KNOW WHO'S REALLY RUNNING UP THE MONEY, IT'S ME AND [BAD BUNNY]!"

Drake

RABBIT TEST



DADDY YANKEE



DON OMAR



OZUNA



J BALVIN



MALUMA

See how well you know Bad Bunny with these 12 multiple-choice questions.

1 | What is Bad Bunny's real first name?

- A Martino
- B Antonio
- C Benito
- D Fernando
- E Santiago

2 | What were the respective professions of his father, Tito, and mother, Lysaurie?

- A Electrician and Social Worker
- B Truck Driver and Teacher
- C Plumber and Accountant
- D Firefighter and Doctor
- E Police Officer and Nurse

3 | What was Bad Bunny's first song to crack the Billboard Hot 100 chart?

- A "Mayores" (feat. Becky G)
- B "Vuelve" (feat. Daddy Yankee)
- C "Soy Peor"
- D "Ahora Me Llama" (feat. Karol G)
- E "Tu No Metes Cabra"

← **4 | Who else appears on the hit "I Like It" alongside Bad Bunny and Cardi B?**

- A Daddy Yankee
- B Don Omar
- C Ozuna
- D J Balvin
- E Maluma

5 | Which Bad Bunny record made *Rolling Stone's* list of the 500 Greatest Albums of All Time?

- A *X 100pre*
- B *YHLQMDLG*
- C *El Último Tour Del Mundo*
- D *Un Verano Sin Ti*
- E *Las Que No Iban a Salir*

6 | What is the name of Bad Bunny's collaborative album with J Balvin?

- A *Paradise*
- B *Oasis*
- C *Heaven*
- D *Utopia*
- E *Shangri-La*



Who did the artist share the spotlight with during his Super Bowl performance?

7 | Who did Bad Bunny perform with at the Super Bowl LIV halftime show?

- A Ricky Martin and Enrique Iglesias
- B Beyoncé
- C Jennifer Lopez and Shakira
- D The Weeknd
- E Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg

8 | Who did Bad Bunny defeat to become the WWE 24/7 Champion?

- A Akira Tozawa
- B Angel Garza
- C Rob Gronkowski
- D R-Truth
- E Titus O'Neil

9 | Who came in second to Bad Bunny as most-streamed Spotify artist in 2021 and 2022?

- A Ariana Grande
- B Taylor Swift
- C BTS
- D Drake
- E Justin Bieber



10 | What is Bad Bunny's character name in the movie *Bullet Train*?

- A The Bear
- B The Tiger
- C The Lion
- D The Snake
- E The Wolf

11 | Which artist's record did Bad Bunny break in 2022 for highest-grossing tour in a single calendar year?

- A U2
- B Ed Sheeran
- C Elton John
- D The Rolling Stones
- E Guns N' Roses

12 | Bad Bunny's upcoming film *El Muerto* spins off from which Marvel superhero?

- A Iron Man
- B The Hulk
- C Spider-Man
- D Captain America
- E Black Widow

ANSWER KEY

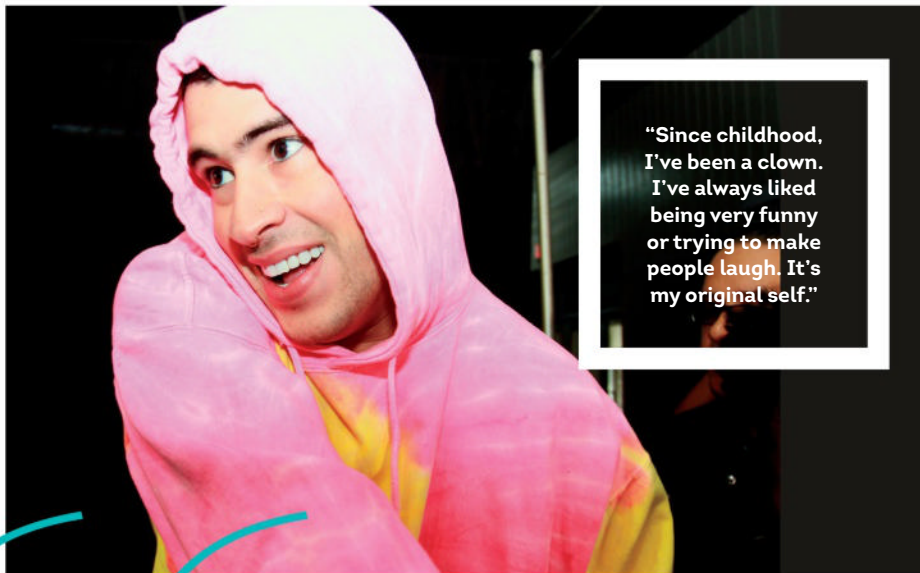
1) C; 2) B; 3) A; 4) D; 5) A; 6) B; 7) C; 8) A; 9) B; 10) E; 11) B; 12) C

→
Bad Bunny
has a way with
words, both in
his songs and
his interviews.

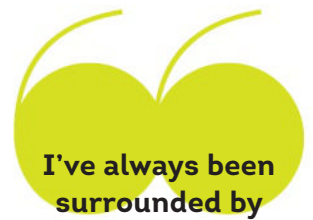
I DON'T WANT
TO BE FAKE.
I'M JUST BEING
ME. AND I HAVE
THE POWER
TO BREAK
STEREOTYPES
AND WHATEVER
USELESS RULES
THAT SOCIETY
PUTS ON US."

In His OWN WORDS

The singer's quotes are both introspective and inspiring.



"Since childhood, I've been a clown. I've always liked being very funny or trying to make people laugh. It's my original self."



I've always been surrounded by many great people and professors, but my family, especially my mom who was a teacher, was the person who encouraged me to study and pushed me to continue.

When we're young, we don't understand why our parents bug us so much with school and doing homework, but it's a blessing to have that support at home."

PUERTO RICO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MUSIC IS EVERYTHING. IT'S AN ISLAND FULL OF TALENT AND IF YOU GROW UP THERE, YOU GROW UP LIVING AND BREATHING MUSIC."



I remember there was a neighbor who would always tell my parents that I was talking to myself. And it was just me playing, making voices of the other characters because I was alone. She would say to my dad, 'That boy is always talking to himself. You should have him checked out.' And my dad was like, 'The boy is playing.'"



"Maybe at the very beginning of my career, I tried to pretend I was someone that I'm not, but I learned that that's the way artists lose themselves."

"The music we do is for people to enjoy, dance and sing to it. Dreamers—keep on dreaming and keep working hard to achieve your goals. There are many difficulties, but what matters is to stay focused and have perseverance."

MUSIC SPOTLIGHT™ COLLECTOR'S EDITION
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←
The star lights up
the stage at a 2018
stop of his La Nueva
Religión Tour in
Oakland, California.

A full-page photograph of Bad Bunny performing on stage. He is wearing a light blue denim jacket over a black t-shirt, camouflage pants, and sunglasses. He is holding a red microphone and singing. The background is a vibrant orange and red with blue and purple light patterns.

The dynamic
artist performs
in Fairfax, Virginia,
during his La Nueva
Religión Tour in
August 2018.

**“AS LONG AS I WAS MAKING MUSIC OR
LISTENING TO MUSIC, I WAS HAPPY.”**

Bad Bunny